ESSAYS

ON THE

LIVES AND WRITINGS

OF

FLETCHER OF SALTOUN

AND THE

POET THOMSON.

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Andrew Fletcher.

From an Authentick Portrait, in the Collection of the Earl of Buchan.

London Published Sep: 21, 1791 by J. Debrett.

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OF

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[illegible] THOMSON,

[illegible] AND POLITICAL,

[illegible] published.

[illegible] *EARL OF BUCHAN.*

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. DEBRETT,
OPPOSITE BURLINGTON-HOUSE, PICCADILLY.

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AND THE

POET THOMSON:

BIOGRAPHICAL, CRITICAL, AND POLITICAL.

With some Pieces of THOMSON's never before published.

BY *D. S. EARL OF BUCHAN.*

K. Erskine

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LONDON:

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INTRODUCTION.

ALTHOUGH I am ſenſible that the very ſound and ſight of the word LIBERTY has become diſagreeable, if not terrible, to the faſhionable world in Britain; yet it is neceſſary that I ſhould introduce the Memoirs of Fletcher and Thomſon with reflections on the principles, manners, and temper, of the times and countries in which

they lived, and of thoſe that preceded their appearance. It is my purpoſe to treat this ſubject very briefly.

It naturally divides itſelf into three parts; the Gothic, Puritanical, and Philoſophical ages: under which three heads, without once mentioning the formidable and proſcribed vocable, I ſhall endeavour to make it clear and convincing to the meaneſt and moſt obdurate capacity, that political energy and ſentiment were never wholly ſuppreſſed in my native country.

1ſt. Political energy and ſentiment eminently appeared in the Gothic, by which I literally denominate that age which was coeval with the formation of military governments on a feudal baſis, by the nations or people that over-ran Europe in ages far beyond the æra of genuine hiſtory, formed the ſtates of Greece and Italy, and afterwards in a more barbarous ſtate overſpred and overpowered the Roman empire, which had ſprung from the ſame original.

But the ſyſtem of Gothic go-

vernment was permanent, and we have it accurately delineated by the maſterly hand of Tacitus, in his Treatiſe on the Situation, Cuſtoms, and People of Germany.

In this æra, which is of immenſe duration, I obſerve political energy and ſentiment exemplified every where in the equal rights of the holders of the ſoil.

In countries and ages where lands were cultivated by ſlaves taken in war, or brought into bondage by conqueſt, there could be no other citizens.

Trade and manufactures were not.

In ſuch a poſture of ſociety ſciences and arts could not exiſt.

The proprietors of the ſoil could not protect themſelves without government; and government requires a prince either ſingle or complex, elective or hereditary.

Governments were therefore formed variouſly, as contingency or neceſſity occaſioned or required.--Scotland, the country to which my ſubject directs me,

was planted and governed in this manner from the beginning.

The miſerable natives who preceded the Goths or Scythians, were treated like the natives of North and South America by the Europeans; and, after ſkulking and ſcalping for ages in their faſtneſſes, muſt have at laſt yielded to neceſſity or reaſon in their obedience to the laws of the ſtrongeſt.

In England, after the derelict-ion of the Roman provinces by the legions, the enervated ſlaves of imperial Rome became

an eaſy prey to every hardy invader. Veni, vidi, vici, is a boaſt no way honourable, or peculiar to Cæſar.

The Saxons and Danes, to go no farther, exemplified the motto with a vengeance; and I ſhall allow the baſtard of Normandy to have been a King William, and to have come over to ſave the miſerable Engliſh from Dane-gelt, ſlavery, and arbitrary power.

Great and big books have been written to ſhew that Engliſh law and liberty are as old

as the country. I diſlike big books, and leave Lord Lyttelton in poſſeſſion of the field.

If conſtitutions of government could be juſtly held to admit of no radical amendments, according to the political goſpel of Edmund, then the Gothic conſtitution was as perfect as poſſible.

But the rapid improvement of ſociety ſoon rendered it odious, unjuſt, and ridiculous.

To overthrow it, however, there was no people; for the king and the ſlaves were, in

fact, the only people, and the nobility was the prince.

The king, therefore, with the ſlaves, *aſſumed* the ſtation of the people, and cruſhed more or leſs in different ages and countries *the prince*, combined and compoſed of the great proprietors of the ſoil.

This was accompliſhed by exciting and quelling impotent rebellions, by leaguing with the clergy, eſtabliſhing free towns and corporations, and by encouraging trade and navigation.

James I. King of Scots, was

was far advanced in this plan when he was aſſaſſinated by the Earl of Athol. He had gone ſo far to form a popular government by encouraging the leſſer barons and the boroughs of Scotland, and by the attainder of the great earls, that he uſed to joke with his Queen (the great grand-daughter of Edward III.) ſaying, "My dear, I hope the day is not far diſtant when I may have the pleaſure of finding you in bed with all the nobility of Scotland!" a brave project for a patriot prince, and worthy

worthy of a more fortunate iſſue!

A rich and powerful nobility (alias an oligarchy) muſt ſoon deſtroy the liberties of any people among whom they are ſuffered to domineer.

It is neceſſary to explain what the King of Scots meant by *all the nobility of Scotland.*

They were the Earls and Lords of Regality.

Scotland never knew ſuch a monſtrous order of men as Lords of Parliament.

The Earls had no right to ſit in

in the Parliament but by their lands; but being chief magiſtrates and judges in their counties, with regal powers, theſe, with their territorial advantages ſpringing from the feudal ſyſtem, rendered them truly formidable both to the king and to the commonwealth.

James ſaw the advantages reaped in England by the crown, in conſequence of the formation of a peers houſe of parliament, and the power of calling up great commoners by writ of ſummons to that houſe of parliament, and

wiſhed

wiſhed to adopt ſo crafty an example.

On the trial of Murdoch, Duke of Albany, he eſtabliſhed a precedent for what were called Barons of Baron-rent, to be called Lords and Nobles, and to ſit with precedence in the parliament by royal charter of lands, erecting eſtates into earldoms or baronies, unconnected with the ancient earldoms or county palatines of the kingdom; and, then, by the election of certain members of parliament, for preparing the laws

laws or acts, who were called the Lords of the Articles, choſen from the earls, barons of baron-rent, and the great officers of the ſtate, he contrived to quaſh or prevent motions that were adverſe to the intereſt of the crown *.

I bluſh to repeat the A B C of the political hiſtory of Britain; but as I have not met with a ſhort eſſence of it in any of our modern novels, I hope I may be excuſed, at leaſt, by ladies and gentlemen who ſeldom turn over unwieldy vo-

* See Burnet's Hiſtory of his Own Times.

lumes.

lumes. Thus the creation of a tiers etat, or, of the weight of the people in the political balance, as is well obſerved in Captain Newte's admirable Tour in Scotland, was not the work of patriots, but of kings. In Sir William Wallace, the *Tell* of Scotland, we have a precious unique in the Gothic age of Scotiſh political energy and ſentiment; and had Scotland belonged by hereditary claims to England or France, he would probably have engaged his countrymen to have formed a republic like the Swiſs.

He

He was envied and hated by the earls and great barons of Scotland; and by *their* treachery he fell a martyr to the independency and liberties of his country. It is in vain to ſearch for the moral and rational principles of government in the military Gothic age: in thoſe wretched times men had no civic union, no proper interchange of political ſentiment. Fixed, or rather chained as they were to the ſoil of their maſters, the people were without colliſion of ſentiment; had no organized ſocieties for the

the contemplation of common intereſts; no high roads, no poſts, no printing-preſſes! What is man in ſuch a ſituation, but the machine of regal or princely ambition and luxury!

II. I come now to conſider the puritanical age of political energy and ſentiment. Nothing could have been more fortunate for mankind, than the deſtruction of the degraded Greek empire by the Turks, ſo ſoon after the diſſemination of the doctrines of Wickliffe, and the reformers of the church of Rome.

It gave Europe philoſophers, and teachers, and men of learning, Greek, and ſenſe, and ſpirit.

Human genius and ſentiment are always moſt agreeably excited by the contemplation of misfortunes. We naturally attach ourſelves to the ſide of the loſer of a conteſt. The ſtruggles for liberty in Greece and Italy, recorded ſo eloquently by the Greek and Roman claſſics, imbued the minds of youth, and excited the feelings of the aged with the ardour of political ſentiment. The people then began

to know truly what it is to be a member of a free commonwealth, to be a citizen: delightful name! beſt of inheritances, beſt of rights, not to be ſurrendered, but with the life that accompanies it! With theſe ſublime and heart-engaging affections, the ſtudy of the Scriptures of Moſes and the Evangeliſts in the living languages of Europe, and the conſolation of free agency in the choice of religious opinions, remarkably contributed to the creation of new political energy among all ranks

of men, but particularly among the middling and lower claſſes of the people, who by religious controverſy were made, as it were, artificial members of ſociety, and felt the inexpreſſible and captivating delight of thinking and acting for themſelves, and of touching and affecting general ſociety.—The clergy, irritated to madneſs by the diſſolution of their magic ſuperſtition, and looking forward to the total deſtruction of their profitable fable of the church, perſecuted the thinking and reform-

ing

ing people; and this laid the foundation of that perception of religious liberty, which immediately connected itſelf with political liberty in Scotland ſo early as the reign of James V. and in England towards the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Buchanan aroſe in Scotland like the morning ſtar, to announce the approach of philoſophical day.

He was the father of whiggery *as a ſyſtem* in Britain, if not in Europe; the Lord Bacon or Newton of political ſcience and

ſentiment, by far the greateſt man of his age, as Napier was of his country, in invention: in as much as political ſcience is above all others in real importance, with reſpect to which we may fairly ſet down every other with an adject of a "haud ſimile aut ſecundum." To women, ſome how or other, we have been indebted from the beginning for fortunate revolutions, ſaving in the caſe of Lady Adam, and even that is not carbonified by the ſtricteſt theologians.

To the beauty, gaiety, and im-

imprudence of Mary Stuart, the daughter of James V. we are indebted for the preſent ſtate of Britain, ſuch as it is. Had Mary been prudent, Scotland might have become a Popiſh monarchy. England at beſt would have been under its old monarchy (with proper addreſs), under the Stuarts; and we ſhould not have had occaſion to deprecate Gallic freedom with the monſtrous inſanity of modern Engliſhmen; but to deplore the want of it.

It were needleſs and ſuperfluous for me in this ſketch to

delineate the minute progreſs of puritanical patriotiſm, from the depoſition of Mary Queen of Scots, to that of her great grandſon James the Seventh of Scotland, and Second of England.

In Scotland, even down to the period of the union of the kingdoms and parliaments, the people had no nerves for feeling political ſentiment, ſave through the medium of religion or ſuperſtition.

Give Sawney his Sunday's miniſter to his liking, and he cared not who were miniſters

of

of ſtate. Even during the long paper as well as cartridge war in the laſt century, we hear and ſee little in their acts or writings that ſavoured in the leaſt of moral or political liberty. Every thing ſmelt of the ſcarlet lady of Rome. There were Scottiſh Hampdens, but no Sidneys. Buchanan and Fletcher alone were elevated above the ages in which they lived, and ſhed a luſtre towards thoſe that were to ſucceed, which will continue to ſhine more and more unto the perfect day. I glory in being the attire-

man

man of the characters of ſuch *figurative princes*, and rejoice to think that even in that humble connection my name may be handed down to diſtant poſterity! My anceſtor Marr was a favourite pupil of Buchanan's, imbibed his ſcience and principles, and handed them down to the race of the Stuart Erſkines. I glory alſo, therefore, in paying this family tribute to that glorious pedagogue.

III. I proceed now with pleaſure to the age of philoſophical politics, which Thomſon, my

favourite bard, and the bard of liberty, ſaw before his death, like another prophet from Piſgah, ſaw and rejoiced!

The act of parliament which put an end to the heretable juriſdictions in Scotland, together with the wiſe and prudent adminiſtration of Archibald Duke of Argyl, and Lord Milton, gave Scotland a free avenue to political and civil exertion: the land was fallow, and cultivated by honeſt and active huſbandmen, it preſently bore abundant harveſts. It would be invidious in

my

my own times to ſelect names for enumeration and eulogy. They whom I have formerly named and celebrated will *not* be ſaved from oblivion by my feeble efforts. They would have lived without my encomium. Yet I arrogate to myſelf ſome degree of praiſe that I was taught, and that I learnt how to diſcriminate tinſel from gold. Hume, and Napier, and Fletcher, and Buchanan, and Thomſon, will live for ever. Can I enough regret that Hume was a tory, and a fooliſh enthuſiaſt in ſcepticiſm?

Yet

Yet I will not attempt to touch his immortality; *my* ſhafts would but rebound from *his* ſeven-fold ſhield. To the divine influence of the *printing-preſs* is the world indebted for the reign of philoſophy; and to philoſophy it owes the principles of legiſlation.

It is with infinite regret that I cannot pretend to produce from Scotland, during this halcyon reign of philoſophy, any great character ſince the death of Fletcher; for Thomſon was a retired man, and quite out of the walk of political eminence.

What

What could be expected from a country, where the hereditary members of parliament were impotent, and fearfully queſtioned each other on the diſſolution of a parliament, who were named to be of the ſixteen repreſentatives of the nobility of the country and nation? I beheld this infamous degradation of gentlemen, for I will not ſpeak of noblemen, with diſguſt. I called upon the electors to rouſe from their baneful lethargy; and they thought I was about to raiſe a third rebellion. Yet I perſe-

vered.

vered. By and by they began to leap the fold: they found their account in it; and they alſo perſevered. But I will ſay no more about *them*: liberty, and Buchanan, and Fletcher, and Thomſon, are better themes, or at leaſt better ſuited to my humble genius.

I ſtop rather to enquire concerning the comparative ſtate of Britain, in this philoſophical age of political ſentiment, with France and other countries, that have had inferior advantages.

Who but a clerk of the treaſury,

fury, or a lord of the king's bed-chamber, can contemplate this parallel without regret?

It was in the laſt war of George II. that Great Britain laid herſelf under the neceſſity of defending her wide-extended dominion; and of aſſerting her claim to be the firſt nation upon earth. The conteſt was bloody and expenſive, but the end was glorious—The enemy proſtrate and breathleſs, empire extended, honour maintained, peace eſtabliſhed, and, like the ſun riſing after a ſtorm, a young and native

tive monarch holding the ſceptre, and aſcending the throne, amidſt the acclamations of the freeſt and happieſt people on the globe.

Theſe acclamations are heard no more. A ſyſtem of corruption, eſtabliſhed and digeſted early in this reign *by a baneful ariſtocracy*, has pervaded every rank and order of men, till the ſpirit of the conſtitution has fled, and left only the *caput mortuum* behind. The forms of our government have out-laſted the ends for which they were

inſtituted, and have become a mere mockery of the people for whoſe benefit they ſhould operate.

The prophecy of Monteſquieu is fulfilled; and nothing can ſave the country but the fulfilment of the prophecy of Franklin. What that prophecy was, what this prophecy is, I leave to the curious to learn. What I have written, I have written: futurity will determine the truth of my own particular predictions, and whether I am to be remembered as a captious Cynic,

Cynic, or a wiſe and Pythonic politician.

To conclude: As I think it unneceſſary to delineate the ſpirit of the times in Europe with reſpect to government, ſo I think it to be indiſpenſably required at my hands, that I ſhould, with reſpect to Scotland, deprecate the refuſal of a militia to my country, the neceſſity for which was ſo eloquently ſet forth by my favourite Fletcher.

That I ſhould mark with my blackeſt coal the game licence act, which is an inſidious and

dangerous disarming of the commons.

That I should express my utter detestation and abhorrence of the conduct of a first minister, who calling himself the minister of the crown, with a treasonable audacity should dare to advise the dissolution of a parliament, against the sense of a house of commons, the only legal organ of the voice of the people, let that house be ever so ill constructed, and demand ever so much reformation.

That I ſhould loudly proteſt, that a parliament ought to be allowed to die a natural death. And,

That if a parliament, contemplating the foreboding, the ominous imperfections of the conſtitution, ſhould on its deathbed provide for a remedy by the equalization of the repreſentation of the people, it would prevent the dangerous concuſſion which muſt undoubtedly ariſe, *and that quickly*, from their political franchiſes being brought to the level of ſur-

rounding nations with a violent jerk. Let us not (ſaid my admirable preceptor and friend, Adam Smith, author of the Eſſay on the Wealth of Nations) raſhly believe that Great Britain is capable of ſupporting any burden.

Let us conſider what hold we have *now* of the two Indies, of Canada, and our other lucrative dependencies. A blow may be ſtruck, a blow will be ſtruck, that ſhall reach the vitals of public credit, and it is an event which nothing but poli-

political inſanity can induce public miniſters not to provide againſt. But no proviſion can be made againſt this event, except that which has been pointed out by the finger of the genius of Britain's welfare.

I will not offer incenſe to the living, but to the dead: I inſcribe this and the following ſheets to the memory of Sir GEORGE SAVILE, of Rufford Hall, Member of Parliament for the County of York.

THE LIFE OF ANDREW FLETCHER OF SALTOUN.

By D. S. EARL of BUCHAN.

Among innumerable falſe, unmov'd,
Unſhaken, unſeduc'd, unterrify'd,
Nor number, nor example with him wrought
To ſwerve from truth, or change his conſtant mind,
Though ſingle.

PARADISE LOST, b. v.

THE

LIFE

OF

ANDREW FLETCHER

OF SALTOUN.

THE LIFE OF ANDREW FLETCHER OF SALTOUN.

WHEN I did myself the honour, with the assistance of the learned professor Minto, to offer to the publie an account of the life, writings, and discoveries of the inventor of the logarithms, I pledged myself to attempt the biography of Fletcher of Saltoun, and of John Law of Laurieston: but when I set myself to the work, I found it much more difficult than I had imagined.

I confess

I confeſs that I am ambitious of permanent reputation, and loath to hazard even the little I may have obtained in promoting that of others, by obtruding on the world what might be brought forward by men of ſuperior abilities. But, ſeveral years having elapſed without my having any proſpect of being anticipated, I have yielded to the impulſe of my eſteem for the character of Fletcher.

I am afraid, however, that this monument which I endeavour to raiſe to the memory of my patriotic countryman may induce me to write too freely upon the ſubjects which excited my deſire to perpetuate his name: but whether I may pleaſe or offend the preſent little world of the day, when I decently expreſs the feelings of my heart, or the reſult of my reflections, it will give me little concern.

I am

I am the creature of a day, but not the creature of the times.

In politics I would be a Diogenes; and if patronised by the great Alexander of modern politics, whoever may affect that character, I should desire him, as my only requeſt, that he would ſtand out of my light, that I might behold the beautiful fabric of a free conſtitution, undazzled by the ſplendour of power, and unintoxicated by the opinion of the people.

Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun was the ſon of Sir Robert Fletcher of Saltoun and Innerpeffer, by Catharine Bruce, daughter of Sir Henry Bruce of Clackmannan. By his paternal deſcent he was of a family truly honourable, and by his maternal, of the royal race of Bruce; the patriarch of the family of Clackmannan having been the third ſon of Robert de Bruce, lord of Annandale, grandfather of

Robert de Bruce, king of the Scots. His father was the fifth in lineal deſcent from Sir Bernard Fletcher of the county of York *. He married Catharine Bruce in the year 1651; and his eldeſt ſon Andrew, the ſubject of my enquiry, was born in the year 1653 †.

When he had the misfortune to loſe his father, he was but in his early youth, and was deſtined by his father, on his death-bed, to the care of Dr. Burnet, rector of the pariſh of Saltoun, afterwards biſhop of Saliſbury, well known

* Sir Robert's father Andrew was one of the ſenators of the College of Juſtice in Scotland, by the ſtyle of Lord Innerpeffer. He was one of thoſe ſeven truly magnanimous Scots who, with David Lord Cardroſs, proteſted againſt the delivery of King Charles I. at Newcaſtle, to the Engliſh Parliament. He died 1650.—MS. hiſt. of the family in my poſſeſſion.

† MS. hiſt. ut ſupra.

by

by his political zeal and intereſting writings. From Burnet he received, as might have been expected, a very pious and learned education, and was ſtrongly imbued with erudition and the principles of a free government, which were congenial to the family of Fletcher, and eſpouſed by his mother, and by thoſe who had, with her, the charge of his nurture *.

When he had completed his courſe of elementary ſtudies in Scotland, under the care of his excellent preceptor, he was ſent to travel on the continent.

He was from his infancy of a very fiery and uncontroulable temper; but his diſpoſitions were noble and generous †.

* MS. hiſt. ut ſupra.

† MS. hiſt. ut ſupra; from which, where not diſtinguiſhed by other reference, I ſhall draw all my authorities.

He

He became firſt known as a public ſpeaker and a man of political energy, being commiſſioner in the Scotch parliament for the ſhire of Eaſt Lothian, when the Duke of York was lord commiſſioner, connecting himſelf with the Earl of Argyll in oppoſition to the Duke of Lauderdale's adminiſtration, and the arbitrary deſigns of the court, which obliged him to retire firſt into England to conſult with Dr. Burnet, and afterwards, by his advice, into Holland. He was ſummoned to appear before the Lords of the Council at Edinburgh, which he not thinking it prudent for him to do, he was outlawed, and his eſtate confiſcated.

In the year 1683 he, with Robert Baillie of Jerviſwood, came into England in order to concert meaſures with the friends of freedom in that country; and they,

they, I believe, were the only Scotchmen who were admitted into the ſecrets of Lord Ruſſel's Council of Six. They were likewiſe the only perſons in whom the Earl of Argyll confided in Holland the common meaſures of the two countries, which were then concerted with much ſecrecy and danger, for the recovery of the conſtitution and liberties of the Britiſh kingdoms.

Fletcher managed his part of the negociation with ſo much addreſs and prudence, that Adminiſtration, though in no reſpect delicate as to the means of reaching the objects of their jealouſy or reſentment, could find no pretext for ſeizing him, nor could they fix upon him any of the articles of impeachment for which Mr. Baillie of Jerviſwood was condemned and ſuffered capital puniſhment. Mr.

Baillie was offered his pardon on condition of impeaching his friend Fletcher; but he perſiſted to the gallows in rejecting the propoſal with indignation. O noble, excellent, and truly worthy Scot! May your deſcendants and your countrymen ever remember and imitate your example!

On Fletcher's return to the continent, finding no proſpect of his ſafe return to Britain, he dedicated his leiſure to foreign travel, and to the ſtudy of public law and politics; during which period of his life I have fruitleſsly ſought for letters that might not only have traced him in his various ſituations, but furniſhed agreeable and uſeful materials for his biography.

In the beginning of the year 1685, Fletcher came to the Hague, to aſſiſt at the deliberations of the exiles from Britain, and particularly with thoſe of his

own country, with a view to promote the cauſe of oppoſition to the arbitrary meaſures of James II: but it does not appear that he poſſeſſed much of the confidence of the party. He was unaccommodating, and ran extravagantly on the project of ſetting up a commonwealth in Scotland, or at leaſt a monarchy ſo limited as hardly to bear any reſemblance to a kingdom. His ſoul was fired with the recollection of the great ſpirits that had been raiſed by the Greek republics, and, like all men of great abilities, he wiſhed for that ſtate of things which might mark the ſuperiority of his own talents, and give full exerciſe to his popular powers. Argyll's expedition concerted at that time with Monmouth and the party was the moſt inviting to Fletcher; but being diſſatisfied with the plan of operations, and

his countrymen, who enjoyed Monmouth's confidence, he went with the Duke, who was the dupe of the ambitious and crafty Prince of Orange *.

Burnet,

* The ambitious and crafty Prince of Orange.] It is with reluctance that I affix such epithets to a prince who seems to be, as it were, the idol of whigs, who, in hyperbolising the immortal memory of Old Glorious, seem to forget that he was a man, and a politician. My grandfather and great-grandfather came over with him at the Revolution; and I know that I am not without partiality to a character connected with the establishment of what we call the Constitution of the country, and with the illustration of my own family: but I cannot be blind to his faults, nor do I think it would be conducive to the establishment of a real constitution of freedom in the British nation, that such blindness should continue among the people who wish to arrange themselves under the banners of British liberty. That he was ambitious in the disagreeable application

Burnet, in the Hiſtory of his Own Times, informs us that Fletcher had told him,

cation of that epithet appears from his lulling the ſlumbers of royal ſecurity in England, when he was fanning the flames of inſurrection againſt his father-in-law in Holland: from his encouraging the mad project of Monmouth to get him out of the way to the throne, while he was giving good advice to James that the invaſion might be defeated. That he was craftily ambitious, appears not only from this double plot, but from his forcing his way to the throne, inſtead of accepting the regency, by intimidating the chiefs who had invited him over, with a threat of returning to Holland, and leaving them in the hands of an enraged bigoted monarch. That he was ambitious, crafty, and machiavelian, appears from his having given inſtructions *to take care* of King James, if he ſhould remain at Rocheſter, and not be diſpoſed to leave the kingdom. Of the wretched device to ſhake the confidence of the people with reſpect to the Queen's pregnancy, and the Prince of Wales's birth, I ſhall ſay nothing. It

him, that Monmouth, though a weak young man, was ſenſible of the imprudence of his adventure, and heſitated till he was urged by the party, moſt of whom were certainly in concert with the Prince of Orange, and conſidered him as the only probable inſtrument for dethron-

is the diſgrace of the party, and ought to be buried, if poſſible, in oblivion. It is a dangerous as well as a wicked thing for a prince to take ſuch methods of inſuring ſucceſs, as William himſelf afterwards found, by the intrigues of the Princeſs Sophia to turn him out: the proofs of which intrigues King William tied up together in a bundle, which was found in his cabinet. They were ſeen in Lord Rochford's hands while ſecretary of ſtate, were afterwards in other hands that need not be mentioned, and were probably treated as heretics were formerly, and as republicans are now wiſhed to be by ſome other kings. The bundle was docketted by William's own hand—"*Letters of the Princeſs Sophia to turn me out.*"

ing

ing the king, and ſupplanting William in his views, if the attempt were delayed till the Engliſh nation ſhould become deſperate enough to overlook the doubts that Charles II. had confirmed by his declaration in council of the legitimacy of the Duke of Monmouth*. So well was this plot laid, that few of the party in Holland joined in theſe expeditions, but waited either in or out of the ſecret, till they ſhould ſee the effects of the exploſion that was to bury poor Monmouth under its

* Thoſe men urged him on to war and danger, by an appeal to his perſonal courage. They wiſhed in this manner to remove a dangerous rival out of the way of the prince's ambition; well-knowing that if the people of England ſhould become deſperate, they might be induced to overlook the doubts of Monmouth's legitimacy, which had been confirmed by the public declaration of Charles II.

ruins. But Fletcher of Saltoun had neither coolneſs nor ſufficient political ſubtlety to conduct himſelf with a view to his own private emolument. Fired by the hopes of a revolution that, from the inſignificancy of Monmouth, and the circumſtances of his birth, might produce a conſtitution of government in which his republican talents might have full ſcope, he at firſt fell in warmly with the ſcheme of Monmouth's landing; but afterwards, ſuſpecting probably the intrigue of the Prince of Orange, he wiſhed it to be laid aſide. He told Biſhop Burnet (which ſupports this conjecture), that Monmouth was puſhed on to it againſt his own ſenſe and reaſon, and was picqued upon the point of honour in hazarding his perſon with his friends. Monmouth landed at Lime in Dorſetſhire. Soon after their landing,

Lord Grey was ſent with a ſmall party to diſperſe a few of the militia, and ran for it; but his men ſtood, and the militia retreated. Lord Grey brought back a falſe report, which was ſoon contradicted by the men, whom their leader had abandoned, coming back to quarters in good order. The unfortunate Duke of Monmouth was ſtruck with this (ſays Burnet), when he found that the perſon on whom he depended moſt, and for whom he deſigned the command of the cavalry, had already made himſelf infamous by his cowardice. He intended to join Fletcher with him in that command *: but Fletcher having been ſent out on another party, engaged in a ſcuffle, in which he had the misfortune to kill the mayor of

* Burnet.

Lynn

Lynn againſt the laws of war, in the ſudden heat of paſſion, on account of contumelious language uſed to him by the mayor, on reclaiming a horſe of his that had been impreſſed by Fletcher's party. This unguarded, unſoldierly, and unjuſtifiable act of violence, muſt have rendered his future ſervices on the expedition of little conſideration to Monmouth; but it was not the cauſe of his leaving the little army. The account given by Fletcher himſelf of his general conduct at this time to the late Earl Marſhall of Scotland, was, that he had been induced to join the Duke of Monmouth, on the principles of the Duke's manifeſtoes in England and Scotland, particularly by the laws promiſed for the permanent ſecurity of civil and political liberty, and of the proteſtant religion, and the calling of a general con-

greſs

greſs of delegates from the people at large, to form a free conſtitution of government, and not to pretend to the throne upon any claim, except the free choice of the repreſentatives of the people. That, when Monmouth was proclaimed king at Taunton, he ſaw his deception, and reſolved to proceed no farther in his engagements, which he conſidered from that moment as treaſon againſt the juſt rights of the nation, and treachery on the part of Monmouth. That, finding himſelf therefore no longer capable of being uſeful, he left Taunton, and embarked on board a veſſel for Spain. That ſoon after his landing he was committed to priſon; and, on the application of the Engliſh miniſter at Madrid, he was ordered to be delivered up, and tranſmitted to London in a Spaniſh veſſel, which was named for that purpoſe.

That

That one morning, as he was looking penſively through the bar of his dungeon, he was accoſted by a venerable perſon, who made ſign to ſpeak to him. Fletcher, looking if any paſſage could be found for his eſcape, diſcovered a door open, at which he was met by his deliverer, with whom he paſſed unmoleſted through three guards of ſoldiers, who were faſt aſleep; and, without being permitted to return thanks to his guide, he proſecuted his eſcape with the aid of a perſon who ſeemed to have been ſent for that purpoſe, concerning whom he never could obtain any information. That diſguiſed he proceeded in ſafety through Spain, where, when he found himſelf out of all apparent danger, he lingered, and amuſed himſelf with the view of the country, and with ſtudy in the conventual libraries; and having privately

vately obtained credit by bills upon Amſterdam, he bought many rare and curious books, ſome of which are preſerved in the library at Saltoun, in the county of Haddinton. That he had made ſeveral very narrow eſcapes of being detected and ſeized in the courſe of his peregrinations through Spain, particularly in the neighbourhood of a town (the name of which Lord Marſhall had forgotten), where he intended to have paſſed the night; but in the ſkirts of a wood a few miles diſtant from thence, upon entering a road to the right, he was warned by a woman of a very reſpectable appearance, to take the left-hand road, as there would be danger in the other direction. Upon his arrival he found the citizens alarmed by the news of a robbery and murder on the road againſt which he had been cautioned. Some time after this

eſcape,

eſcape, Fletcher's active genius led him to ſerve as a volunteer in the Hungarian war *, where he diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his gallantry and military talents. But the glory which he might have acquired in arms, had he ſerved long enough to have obtained a command, he cheerfully ſacrificed to the ſafety of his country.

Perſuaded that the liberties of Britain, if not of all Europe, hung upon the iſſue of the deſign then in contemplation at the Hague for a revolution in England, and having learned that it had already attained a conſiderable degree of maturity, he haſtened to Holland, and joined himſelf to the groupe of his countrymen who were attached to the intereſts of the Prince of Orange, moſt of whom were refugees from England or Scotland. Lord Stair,

* MS. ut ſupra.

Lord

Lord Melville, Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth, Lord Cardroſs, Sir Robert Steuart of Coltneſs, Dr. Burnet, Mr. James Stuart, afterwards lord advocate of Scotland, and Mr. Cunningham, the editor of Horace, and author of a Latin Hiſtory of Great Britain, which has been lately tranſlated by Dr. W. Thomſon, continuator of principal Watſon's Hiſtory of Spain, and author of ſeveral Philoſophical Romances, &c. &c. and publiſhed by Dr. Hollingberry, one of the preſent king's chaplains, were the Scots with whom he was in the greateſt habits of intimacy *. With theſe gentlemen Fletcher

* Though I hold in ſovereign contempt the inſignificance of modern anecdote, I ſhall ſet down in this place ſome particulars relating to theſe men, that are characteriſtic of their times and hiſtories, that may not be unacceptable to the public. Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth, grandfather of the preſent

cher aſſociated; but his political principles were too high and refined, and his ſenti-

ments

ſent Earl of Marchmont, from his firſt appearance in the Scotch parliament, in the year 1665, as member for the county of Berwick, had diſtinguiſhed himſelf by a noble zeal for the liberties of his country. He was the ableſt man of the party in oppoſition to the adminiſtration of the worthleſs Lauderdale; and in the year 1675, when, according to the deſpotic ſyſtem of that ſcandalous engine of the court, the Scotch privy council, the houſes of perſons diſagreeable to adminiſtration were made barracks of for the troops, he had the ſpirit to bring a complaint into the courts of juſtice with reſpect to the garriſoning the houſe of Blanſe in Berwickſhire; for the exerciſe of which right he was brought before the privy council, who declared him incapable of all public truſt, committing him priſoner to the common tolbooth or jail of Edinburgh, where he underwent a long and tedious impriſonment, from whence, upon petition on account of ſickneſs, he was conveyed to the caſtle of Dunbarton, and afterwards to Stirling caſtle,

ments were too Roman, or rather, as I may now ſay, too Gallic, and too much in

caſtle, where he remained ſome years. When liberated, he retired into England, where being in ſtrict habits of friendſhip with the friends of liberty, and particularly with Lord Ruſſel, he found it neceſſary for him to go abroad on the breaking out of the Rye-houſe plot, and lived ſome time at Geneva, from whence he went to the Hague, to concert with his fellow-ſufferers the meaſures that were followed by the expeditions of Monmouth and Argyll, with the latter of whom he came over, and narrowly eſcaped being taken after the defeat of Argyll's forces, taking ſhelter and lying in concealment in the houſe of the Laird of Langſhaw, and afterwards in the aiſle of the church of Polwarth, the burial-place of his family. All his food was brought to him in the night time by his eldeſt daughter, then only twelve years old. This place of concealment having been diſcovered, a party was ſent to apprehend him. As the ſoldiers paſſed near a gentle-

in the odour of philoſophical politics, to accept of the privilege granted by James the

man's houſe in the neighbourhood, who was friendly to Sir Patrick, and to liberty, they were invited by him, who knew their errand, to carouſe on his ale and beſt cheer; while he, aware of the danger of writing, immediately ſent a feather incloſed in a bit of paper, as a ſymbol of flight, to Sir Patrick in the aiſle at Polwarth; who, preſently interpreting the figure, took horſe, and fortunately eſcaped and fled into Holland, where he remained under the feigned name of Brown, till he came over with the Prince of Orange at the Revolution.

Sir Patrick was born on the 13th of January 1641; appointed lord chancellor of Scotland May 2d, 1696; lord high commiſſioner, or lord lieutenant of Scotland, 1702. He died at Berwick on the 1ſt of Auguſt 1724, in the 84th year of his age, highly reſpected for his attachment to the liberties of his country, for his virtue, religion, and learning. His ſon and heir Alexander, Earl of Marchmont, after

a ſeries

the Second's act of indemnity to return to his country and eſtate, when under the dominion

a ſeries of political ſituations, not coming as one does now-a-days from being a ſchool-boy to be a prime miniſter, was our ambaſſador at the congreſs of Cambray in the year 1721; and his ſon Hugh, now Earl of Marchmont, made a brilliant figure in the Houſe of Commons in oppoſition to the corrupt adminiſtration of Sir Robert Walpole, and was afterwards an uſeful member of the Houſe of Peers, yet moſt of all diſtinguiſhed by his learning, and by having been the friend of Pope, Swift, Atterbury, and Arbuthnot. Party politics in England cannot ſecure permanent fame; and I rejoice to think that my old good friend, the friend of my father and grandfather, has ſecured his immortality by literature.

In his philoſophic retreat at Hemel Hempſted, he may perhaps deign to be flattered with my hereditary regard.

Henry Lord Cardroſs, the ſon of David Lord Cardroſs of Dryburgh, &c. who proteſted againſt

dominion of diſguiſed deſpotiſm, ſanctified by a venal parliament: ſo that when

the delivering up of King Charles I. at Newcaſtle, had been trained, in the manner of his family, in the exalted principles of religion, liberty, and learning; and early joined himſelf to the oppoſers of the Duke of Lauderdale's adminiſtration. For his lady's hearing her own chaplain preach in her own houſe, he was fined in five thouſand pounds, of which he paid a thouſand; and, after many months attendance at court for procuring a diſcharge of the overplus of his fine, was finally impriſoned in the caſtle of Edinburgh, where he continued four years; while his houſe of Cardroſs in Perthſhire, immediately after it had been repaired, and furniſhed at a great expence, was garriſoned to his great loſs and vexation. And in June 1679, the king's forces, in their march to the weſt (the day before the Duke of Buccleugh came to them), wheeled and went about two miles out of the road, that they might quarter on Lord Cardroſs's eſtates of Kirkhall and Uphall, in Weſt Lothian.

After-

when Argyll, Sutherland, Melville, and others had recovered their inheritances in

Afterwards, having obtained his liberation, he went to North America, and eſtabliſhed a colony in Carolina, which was deſtroyed by the Spaniards. He returned, broken but not diſpirited by misfortunes, to Europe, and attached himſelf to the friends of liberty in Holland. He raiſed a regiment of dragoons, on the Revolution, and was an uſeful commander under M'Kay in Scotland, in ſubduing the remains of oppoſition there to the new government; but died of the effects of his ſufferings, in the year 1693, in the 43d year of his age.—Concerning Sir Robert Steuart of Coltneſs, there is an anecdote ſo hiſtorically curious, that I cannot paſs him over without notice, though he was a perſon of no extraordinary eminence. In the end of the year 1686, when the buſineſs of the Teſt was in agitation, William Penn was employed at the court of the Prince of Orange, to reconcile the Stadtholder to the views of his father-in-law. Penn became acquainted with moſt

in the year 1686, he choſe rather to remain in exile than to accept of liberty as

of the Scotch fugitives, and, among the reſt, with Sir Robert Steuart, and his brother James, who wrote the famous Anſwer to Fagel's Memorial, and will be mentioned more particularly hereafter: and finding that the violence of their zeal reached little farther than the enjoyment of their religious liberty, on his return to London he adviſed the meaſure of an indemnity and recal to the perſecuted Preſbyterians, who had not been engaged in treaſonable acts of oppoſition to the civil government. Sir Thomas availed himſelf of this indemnity to return to his own country; but found his eſtate and only means of ſubſiſtence in the poſſeſſion of the Earl of Arran, afterwards Duke of Hamilton. Soon after his coming to London he met Penn, who congratulated him on his being juſt about to feel experimentally the pleaſure ſo beautifully expreſſed by Horace, of the "Mihi me reddentis agelli." Coltneſs ſighed, and ſaid, "Ah, Mr. Penn! Arran has got my

as a royal favour! Yet Alexander Cunningham, the hiſtorian, though a Whig and

my eſtate, and I fear my ſituation is about to be now worſe than ever." "What do you ſay, Goſpel?" (a name Coltneſs had got at the Hague:) "You ſurpriſe and grieve me exceedingly. Come to my houſe to-morrow, and I will ſet matters to rights for thee."

Penn went immediately to Arran. "What is this, friend James," ſaid he to him, "that I hear of thee? Thou haſt taken poſſeſſion of Coltneſs's eſtate; thou knoweſt that it is not thine." "That eſtate," replied Arran, "I paid a great price for. I received no other reward for my expenſive and troubleſome embaſſy in France except this eſtate; and I am certainly much out of pocket by the bargain."

"All very well, friend James," ſaid the Quaker; "but of this aſſure thyſelf, that if thou doſt not give me this moment an order on thy chamberlain for two hundred pounds to Coltneſs, to carry him down to his native country, and a hundred a year to ſubſiſt on till matters are adjuſted, I will make it as

and friend of Fletcher, mentions this conduct of Fletcher's as extravagant. It was reſerved for this age of wonders to exhibit the true principles of political ſentiment, unconnected with ſuperſtition and perſonal attachment to kings or to parties.

Fletcher made a manly, noble appear-

many thouſands out of thy way with the king." Arran inſtantly complied, and Penn ſent for Sir Robert, and gave him the ſecurity. After the Revolution, Sir Thomas, with the reſt, had full reſtitution of his eſtate, and Arran was obliged to account for all the rents he had received; againſt which this payment only was allowed to be ſtated.—This authentic particular I received from my illuſtrious uncle, the late Sir James Steuart Denham, father of the preſent worthy member for Clydeſdale. It ſtrongly marks the keenneſs of King James to facilitate his fooliſh meaſures in favour of his religion and arbitrary power.

ance

ance in that convention which met in Scotland, after the Revolution, for the ſettlement of the new government. In Scotland the rights and liberties of the people had been determined and fixed by multiplied inſtances of changing the order of ſucceſſion, and attainting their ſovereigns for treaſon againſt the rights of the people: and it is to Scotland and a Scotchman that the world is indebted for the eſtabliſhment of the philoſophical and logical principles of a free conſtitution both in theory and practice. George Buchanan, the greateſt man of his age, as well as country, eſtabliſhed, by irrefragable arguments, in his treatiſe or dialogue concerning the rights of the people of Scotland, the rights of all mankind; was the father of whiggery, and, what is much grander, the father of that ſyſtem

which

which will one day verify the prophecies of the Chriſtian Scriptures, to the abaſement of kings, and the deſtruction of prieſtcraft.

Raymond de Sebonde in France, the friend of Montaigne, adopted the principles of Buchanan in his Lettre ſur la Servitude Volontaire, a beautiful little piece publiſhed by his friend, which being univerſally read with the Eſſays of Montaigne, kept up the ſacred fire of freedom in France, in the midſt of folly and deſpotiſm, till the progreſs of commerce, printing, philoſophy, and literature opened the eyes of Frenchmen every where to diſcover that they were men, and ought to be citizens; that men were not born with *gold chains* about their necks, with ſtars upon their breaſts, or coronets upon their heads; that it is of the nature of kings

as

as hitherto conſtituted, to conſider their intereſts as ſeparate from their nations, and to watch continually like wolves or foxes for their prey, in order to deſtroy the citizens committed to their charge; that it is neceſſary, therefore, that they ſhould have only the power of obeying the laws made by the people, with that of doing good; but that the power of doing miſchief, either by prerogative or *influence*, ought to be taken away. Theſe were the principles of Fletcher, principles that ſeemed extravagant, diſloyal, and impracticable in his days; but which are now acknowledged almoſt every where, except in Spain, Germany, and England. Theſe have ever been the principles of his biographer: but he will not ſtoop to examine the ravings of a ſublime and beautiful

beautiful apologiſt for tyranny and ſuperſtition.

" A fairer perſon loſt not heaven; he ſeem'd
For dignity compos'd, and high exploit:
But all was falſe and hollow; though his tongue
Dropp'd manna, and could make the worſe appear
The better reaſon, to perplex and daſh
Matureſt counſels."

A man formed like Cicero for ſinging like a nightingale in a cage, to be kept for the gratification of luxurious patricians, now the friend of Pompey, and now of Cæſar, as it ſuited the indulgence of his inordinate vanity; fond of words like a ſchool-maſter, and fond of trappings like a ſilly little girl let out of a boarding-ſchool. I would indulge him with a copy of verſes of my own compoſition, written in the ſtyle of a madrigal upon my miſtreſs's eye-brow.

" Mould'ring

"Mould'ring and frail, to duſt the body tends,
And human greatneſs ſtubborn fortune bends:
Fleeting and vain the ſtoried urns ariſe,
And like a cloud the human vapour flies.
Vain are our buſts and portraits to retain
The ſoul's bright form, and light the lamp again:
By life alone the mimic form revives,
A Tully dead, a Tully yet ſurvives;
Mortal by nature, endleſs in the kind,
Succeſſive ages ſhew the kindred mind."

Fletcher uſed to ſay with Cromwell and Milton, that the trappings of a monarchy and a great ariſtocracy would patch up a very clever little commonwealth. Being in company one day with the witty Dr. Pitcairn, the converſation turned on a perſon of learning whoſe hiſtory was not diſtinctly known. "I knew the man well," ſaid Fletcher: "he was hereditary profeſſor of divinity at Hamburgh." "*Hereditary* profeſſor!" ſaid Pitcairn, with a laugh

a laugh of aſtoniſhment and deriſion. "Yes, Doctor," replied Fletcher, "hereditary profeſſor of divinity. What think you of a hereditary king?"

Having ſaid ſo much upon the principles of Fletcher, I think it proper at this juncture of political reform in Europe, that I ſhould guard my own expreſſed opinions againſt popular miſinterpretation on a ſubject of ſuch great importance to the happineſs of my country.

I have ever thought it was a misfortune to Britain that the Revolution was followed by ſo imperfect a ſyſtem of political arrangement, and that it would have been more conducive to the future happineſs of the nation, if we had had to erect an entire new fabric of a conſtitution in the preſent improved ſtate of ſociety, than to clear out, patch, and buttreſs the edifice,

as

as has been partially done by the Convention Parliament in the year 1689, by the Bill of Rights, by the Act of Succeſſion, by the Treaty of Union, by the abolition of heritable juriſdictions and feudal tenures, of perſonal ſlavery, the confirmation and extenſion of the act of Habeas Corpus, the ſecurity of the liberty of ſpeech and writing, and of printing, the ſecuring private property againſt the claims and nullum tempus of the crown, the abridgment of the powers of the eccleſiaſtical courts, the abolition of perſonal ſlavery in Britain, the independency of the ſalaries of the criminal and civil judges and magiſtrates, by the Grenvilian law of elections, the excluſion of tax-gatherers from the right of popular ſuffrage in elections of members of parliament, and finally by the declaration of

the

the rights of juries, as judges both of the law and of the fact.

But as things are now ſituated, Britain muſt be ſatisfied to fall at leaſt a century behind all other nations, that, like America and France, have had the advantage of erecting a conſtitution from the firſt foundations of juriſprudence, and of eſcaping the dangers that ariſe from dilapidation.

Had I a crazy old family manſion, I ſhould have been better pleaſed that my fathers had left me the taſk of erecting a new one, which I might have done cheaper and better than patching the old; but having the manſion, I ſhould conſider well before I pulled it to the ground. The conſtitution of England, Scotland, and Ireland admits of a great and a ſafe improvement, which will be ſoon demanded and obtained by the people, the

equalization

equalization of the rights of election, and the abolition of the rights of primogeniture in private ſucceſſion. But I would warn my countrymen againſt every approach to haſty determination upon the methods of repairing the old houſe, leſt it ſhould tumble about their ears.

When the fanatics, in the year 1567, came to pull down the cathedral of Glaſgow, a gardener who ſtood by, ſaid, "My friends, cannot you make it a houſe for ſerving your God in your own way? For it would coſt your country a great deal to build ſuch another." The fanatics deſiſted, and it is the only cathedral in Scotland, that remains entire and fit for ſervice. Such, therefore, with reſpect to the Britiſh conſtitution, is the advice of the gardener of Dryburgh Abbey. I reject the uniform as I do the principles

of the Windſor Club, nor will I give any preference to that of Carleton-Houſe, where ſenſe and reaſon are out of the queſtion: but I unaffectedly write in ſincerity and truth, what I know to be conducive to the tranquillity and future happineſs of a proſperous and induſtrious, but corrupted and enervated people.

It was ſaid of Fletcher, that he wiſhed for a republic in which he himſelf ſhould rule by his popular talents; but his temper was unaccomodating: nor is there any ground for ſuppoſing that his views in any tranſaction were ſelfiſh. He was the contriver and mover of the act of the Scotch parliament to ſtop any ſettlement of the crown until the conſtitution was formed, and the rights of the people ſecured; and his ſpeeches on that occaſion will be found in this volume, full of

good

good ſenſe, and of manly claſſical eloquence.

The Duke of Hamilton was ſuſpected of wiſhing to embarraſs the ſettlement of the crown, with a view to favour the eventual pretenſions of his own family. He went ſecretly on board the ſhip of Van Aärſen Somelsdijke, the Dutch admiral in the road of Leith, and propoſed an union of Scotland and Holland as one commonwealth. It may be gueſſed who expected to be vice ſtadtholder in Scotland *. Nothing could be more natural than the averſion the Scots felt to be ſunk and loſt in the great empire of Britain; and it was as natural for Hamilton and Fletcher to foment this averſion with different intentions, and from differ-

* Communicated by Somelsdijke to his relation Lord Auchenleck, one of the ſenators of the College of Juſtice in Scotland.

ent motives. Lockhart of Carnwath, the memoir writer, flattered himſelf that Fletcher was a Tory, if not a Jacobite, in his heart, becauſe he aſſociated with Tories and Jacobites: but he did not reflect that the Tories and Jacobites were then the country party, and that Fletcher would hear more from them of the dignity, independence, and intereſt of his country, and leſs about a king that inſpires a republican with no ſentiment but terror or diſlike. This, I believe, was the foundation for his being ſuſpected *of not being a true Whig at bottom*; for Whigs and Tories were in thoſe days quite diſtinct, diſliking and avoiding each other, not mingled together as they now are, to ſhare among themſelves the plunder of their country.

From the moſt minute examination of

of the records and memoirs of the times, it ſufficiently appears, that while others, whether Whigs or Tories, were endeavouring to turn the Revolution in Britain to the promoting of their own ſelfiſh purpoſes, Fletcher neither aſked nor obtained any emolument from the court; but that he was continually attentive to the intereſt and honour of Scotland.

When an attempt was made, in the year 1692, to bring about a counter-revolution, Fletcher's ruling principle (though diſſatisfied with King William) was the good of his country. He uſed all his influence with the Duke of Hamilton to forget the cauſes of his diſguſt, and to co-operate with the friends of a free conſtitution *.

* Vide Fletcher's Letter to the Duke, Dalrymple's Memoirs.

In every propoſal for the happineſs and glory of his country, Fletcher was intereſted as if it tended to his own perſonal emolument and reputation. He was the firſt friend and patron of that extraordinary man Paterſon, the projector of the Darien Company; to whoſe merits my kinſman Sir John Dalrymple has done the juſtice they deſerve, in the laſt volume of his intereſting Memoirs of Great Britain, which, unable as I am to deſcribe with equal ſpirit and ability the ſhare Fletcher had in this buſineſs, I ſhall give in Sir John's own words.

" Ingenious men draw to each other like iron and the loadſtone: Paterſon, on his return to London, formed a friendſhip with Mr. Fletcher of Saltoun, whoſe mind was inflamed with the love of pub-

lic good, and all of whoſe ideas to procure it had a ſublimity in them. Fletcher diſliked England merely becauſe he loved Scotland to exceſs; and therefore the report common in Scotland is probably true, that he was the perſon who perſuaded Paterſon to truſt the fate of his project to his own countrymen alone, and to let them have the ſole benefit, glory, and danger in it; for in its danger Fletcher deemed ſome of its glory to conſiſt. Although Fletcher had nothing to hope for, and nothing to fear, becauſe he had a good eſtate, and no children; and though he was of the country party; yet in all his ſchemes for the public good, he was in uſe to go as readily to the king's miniſters as to his own friends, being indifferent who had the honour of doing

good, provided it was done. His houſe of Saltoun in Eaſt Lothian was near to that of the Marquis of Tweedale, then miniſter for Scotland; and they were often together. Fletcher brought Paterſon down to Scotland with him, preſented him to the Marquis, and then, with that power which a vehement ſpirit always poſſeſſes over a diffident one, perſuaded the Marquis, by arguments of public good, and of the honour which would redound to his adminiſtration, to adopt the project. Lord Stair and Mr. Johnſton, the two ſecretaries of ſtate, patroniſed thoſe abilities in Paterſon which they poſſeſſed in themſelves; and the lord advocate, Sir James Steuart, the ſame man who had adjuſted the Prince of Orange's declaration at the Revolution, whoſe ſon was married

married to a niece of Lord Stair *, went naturally along with his connections."

FROM this buſy period till the meeting of the Union Parliament, Fletcher

* Anne Dalrymple, daughter of Sir Hugh Dalrymple, lord preſident of the Court of Seſſion, was married to Sir James Steuart of Goodtrees, baronet, ſolicitor general for Scotland, and by him was the mother of the late learned and truly eminent Sir James Steuart Denham, author of the Principles of Political Oeconomy; and four daughters, the ſecond of whom, Agnes, of elegant taſte and genius, was the mother of all my father's children, ſome of whom inherit her abilities, the ſtrong natural parts and probity of the father, with the taſte and brilliant imagination of the mother. "Fortes creantur fortibus & bonis." If this compliment to my brothers ſhall appear too ſtrong, and be blamed, I look for the reward of Proculeius —"Notus in fratres animi paterni."

was

was uniform and indefatigable in his parliamentary conduct, continually attentive to the rights of the people, and *jealous, as every friend to his country ought to be, of their invaſion by the king and his miniſters; for it is as much of the nature of kings and miniſters to invade and deſtroy the rights of the people, as it is of foxes and weaſels to riſle a poultry yard, and deſtroy the poultry.*—All of them therefore ought to be muzzled.

Fletcher was accordingly a ſtrenuous but unſucceſsful advocate for a national militia. His diſcourſe on that important ſubject written at this time, was not printed until the year 1698. In this Diſcourſe he ſays, what I wiſh I had a voice loud enough to be heard over all Britain and Ireland, to rattle in the ears of the people—"A good and effective militia is of

ſuch

ſuch importance to a nation, that it is the chief part of the conſtitution of any free government. For though, as to other things, the conſtitution be ever ſo ſlight, a good militia will always preſerve the public liberty. But in the beſt conſtitution that ever was, as to all other parts of government, if the militia be not upon a right foot, the liberty of that people muſt periſh.

"The Swiſs," ſays he, "at this day are the freeſt, happieſt, and the people of all Europe who can beſt defend themſelves, becauſe they have the beſt militia."

What a reproach to the nobility, the gentry, and to the people of Scotland, is it not, that, attending to the dirty conſideration of pleaſing a ſub-miniſter of Scotland,

land, they ſhould have lately flinched from forcing the Britiſh legiſlature to make them free citizens, and to enjoy the free uſe of arms in defence of their own conſtitution!

———Pudet hæc opprobria nobis,
Et dici potuiſſe, & non potuiſſe refelli!

In the year 1703 we find Fletcher great in the debates concerning the fixing the ſucceſſion to the crown of Scotland, in the event of Queen Anne's dying without iſſue; which he ſtrenuouſly and ſucceſsfully urged the parliament to determine before they ſhould think of granting any ſupplies to the crown. It was even reſolved, that the ſucceſſor to the crown after Queen Anne, ſhould not be the ſame perſon that was King or Queen of England, *unleſs the juſt rights of Scotland* ſhould be declared in parliament at London,

don, and fully ſettled independent of Engliſh intereſts and councils; and what is remarkable, that wiſe and excellent, but ſeemingly very ſtrong rule of the French conſtitution, that the king or queen ſhould *not* have the power of engaging the nation in war without the conſent of parliament, was determined upon by the parliament of Scotland; in the ſupport and preparation of which law, and others for the ſecurity of Scottiſh freedom, Mr. Fletcher had a conſiderable ſhare, and had great influence by the power of his fervent and manly eloquence. "Prejudice and opinion," ſaid he, "govern the world, to the great diſtreſs and ruin of mankind; and though we daily find men ſo rational as to charm by the diſintereſted rectitude of their ſentiments in all other things, yet, when we touch upon any wrong opinion of theirs with

with which they have been early pre-poſſeſſed, we find them more irrational than any thing in nature, and not only not to be convinced, but obſtinately reſolved not to hear any reaſon againſt it. Theſe prejudices are yet ſtronger when they are taken up by great numbers of men, who confirm each other through the courſe of ſeveral generations, and ſeem to have their blood tainted, or, to ſpeak more properly, their animal ſpirits influenced by them. Of theſe deluſions, one of the ſtrongeſt and moſt pernicious has been a violent inclination in many men to extend the prerogative of the prince to an abſolute and unlimited power. And though in limited monarchies all good men profeſs and declare themſelves enemies to all tyrannical practices, yet many even of theſe are found ready to oppoſe

ſuch

ſuch neceſſary limitations as might ſecure them from the tyrannical exerciſe of power in a prince, not only ſubject to all the infirmities of other men, but, by the temptations ariſing from his power, to far greater. This *humour* * has increaſed greatly in the Scottiſh nation, ſince the union of the crowns in 1603; and the ſlaviſh ſubmiſſions, which have been made neceſſary to procure the favours of the court, have cheriſhed and fomented a ſlaviſh principle. I muſt put the repreſentatives of the Scots in mind, that no ſuch principles were known in this kingdom before the union of the crowns, *and that no monarchy in Europe* was more limited, nor any

* *Humeur*, Scoto-Gallic, fancy, whim. An oppreſſed people can never know what the Engliſh exhibited of humour *when they were free.*

people

people more jealous of liberty than the Scots *."

Fletcher

* I David Stewart, Earl of Buchan, do throw this gauntlet of Fletcher's down, in the preſence of all England; and if any man ſhall take it up, I will try my ſtrength with him; but I will not argue with women or prieſts, till I ſhall ſee them leaving their trenches of petticoats and ſuperſtition, and meeting me on the fair and manly field of hiſtorical knowledge.

Hume told the people of England the truth about their old conſtitution, and they called him a Tory. I tell them that Hume was in the right, and I defy them to call *me* a Tory. It was no rarity for the Scots to dethrone a King for attacking the liberties of the people. They diſmiſſed Baliol becauſe he ſold his country; they diſmiſſed Mary becauſe ſhe meant to govern them like the France of the Guiſes; they brought in Bruce as the Prince of Orange of Scotland; and for the principles and practice I refer to Buchanan's Dialogue de Jure Regni apud Scotos.

There

Fletcher was by far the moſt nervous and correct ſpeaker in the parliament of Scotland,

There never was ſuch a thing as a peer of Scotland. There were earls indeed, but they did not ſit in parliament in right of their earldoms, but in right of their lands; and there they were only on a par with other proprietors of fiefs. James I. of the Scots indeed attempted to introduce the Engliſh modes, and was murdered, like Cæſar, by his kinſman; and James VI. by the ſtatute 1587, introduced the practice of the election of repreſentatives for the freeholders; but the nobility, as they were called, *not the peerage* of Scotland, were no more than the barons or freeholders, barons of baron-rent, who by uſage retained their privilege of ſitting in parliament in right of their lands, which if they ſold, they loſt their right of ſitting, along with their poſſeſſions.

There was but one houſe of parliment: and in this, unfortunately for Scotland, the prieſts had a privilege to ſit in right of their lands. But the Scots had no notion of ſuch a monſtrous organ of power for their king, as a ſeparate houſe for his ſervants,

Scotland, for he drew his ſtyle from the pure models of antiquity, and not from the groſſer practical oratory of his contemporaries; ſo that his ſpeeches and his language will bear a compariſon with the beſt ſpeeches of the reign of Queen Anne, the Auguſtan age of Great Britain, far ſuperior to the meretricious, inflated, metaphorical ſtyle of our modern orators; from which remark I muſt ſet down Mr. Charles Fox, member for Weſtminſter in the preſent parliament, as a wonderful exception. In many reſpects Fox re-

and chaplains, to ſtop the progreſs of laws in favour of the rights of the people, before they ſhould come to receive the royal aſſent. As to the idea of a perfect conſtitution being to conſiſt of three parts, this was a trinity in which the Scots did not believe; and they ſatisfied themſelves with holding the doctrine of the unity, the majeſty, and uncontroulable power of the legiſlative authority.

ſembles Fletcher; and may he cloſe his career ſo as to deſerve an equal character!

The iraſcibility of Fletcher's temper, and his high ſenſe of honour, made him impatient of the ſlighteſt tendency towards an affront. Lord Stair, when ſecretary of ſtate, having let fall ſome expreſſions in parliament, that ſeemed to glance at Fletcher, he ſeized Stair by the robe, in his place, and gave him the reply valiant. Lord Stair was called to order by the Houſe, and was obliged to aſk his pardon publicly.

Fletcher's ſpeeches on the conſideration of the Treaty of Union being printed in the following ſheets of this volume, I ſhall only quote a paſſage of Alexander Cunningham's hiſtory, relating to his appearances on that important occaſion. "Andreas Fletſerus, ut qui patriam prius

in libertatem vindicaret, bis ſe in vitæ diſcrimen intulerat, nunc vulnus inſanabile reipublicæ inferendum, et Scotiam veluti funere per ſuos elatam, cernens hoc tempore extremo, in dicendo efferveſcit, reginæque miniſtros vehementer inſectatur, et exagitat, nihil res domeſticas, licet amplas, faciens. Sunt qui illius vim eloquentiæ, etiam in inimicitiis gerendis, virtutem nimium efferbuiſſe, & cauſæ nocuiſſe dicunt; *ſed quid vetat filium in funere matris commoveri*, aut civem fortem in efferendam funere patriam, dolore graviter inuri, præſertim is qui reipublicæ commoda ſuis neceſſitudinibus ſemper potiora duxerat, mortemque pro patria toties oppetere non dubitaverat? Buchaniæ etiam comes ejuſq; patruus Joannes Areſkinus ſtrenue pro patria contende-

bant,

bant, *nihil penſi cum Galliæ factionis hominibus habentes.*"

Fletcher (ſays the anonymous author of his character in Thomas Rawlinſon's library) was ſteady in his principles, of nice honour, great learning; brave as the ſword he wore; a ſure friend, but an irreconcileable enemy; and would not do a baſe thing to eſcape death.

He would not ſubmit to be called either Whig or Tory, ſaying, *thoſe names were given and uſed to cloak the knaves of both parties.* Bravo!

He had acquired the grammatical knowledge of the Italian ſo perfectly as to compoſe and publiſh a treatiſe in that language; yet he could not ſpeak it, as he found when having an interview with Prince Eugene of Savoy, and being ad-

dreſſed in that language by the Prince, he could not utter a ſyllable to be underſtood. In his perſon he was of low ſtature, thin, of a brown complexion, with piercing eyes; and a gentle frown of keen ſenſibility appeared often upon his countenance.

To the memory of this extraordinary man I have reared this monument. The bodies of men are frail and periſhing: ſo are their portraits and monuments: but, upheld by the power of the Creator, the form of the ſoul is eternal. This cannot be repreſented by ſtatues or by pictures, nor otherwiſe than by a conformity of manners. May whatever was great and truly valuable in Fletcher be for ever imitated by my countrymen, and may the ſplendour of his virtues re-

flect

flect honour upon his family, and glorify his kindred throughout all generations!

Ille ego qui quondam patriæ perculſus amore
Civibus oppreſſis libertati ſuccurrere auſim,
Nunc arva paterna colo, fugioq; limina regum.

Dryburgh Abbey,
July 14, 1791.

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING SOME ACCOUNT OF FLETCHER'S FAMILY; AND NOTES EXPLANATORY OF THE LIFE OF FLETCHER.

THE family of Fletcher of Saltoun deſcends from Sir Bernard Fletcher, a ſon of Fletcher of Hatton in the county of Cumberland. Robert, his ſon, eſtabliſhed himſelf in the county of Tweedale. Andrew, the ſon of Robert, was a merchant at Dundee, in the county of Angus or Forfar. David, the ſon of Andrew, purchaſed the eſtate of Innerpeffer in that county, and married a daughter of Ogilvie of Pourie,

Pourie, and by her had three ſons, Robert, Andrew, and David. Robert died 1613, leaving ſix ſons: Andrew; James, provoſt of Dundee; Robert, laird of Bencho; Sir George Fletcher of Reſtenet in Angus-ſhire; and two others, who died in infancy. Andrew was knighted by James I. 1620; the ſame year he ſucceeded his father in the eſtate of Innerpeffer. He bought the eſtate of Saltoun in Eaſt Lothian, in the year 1643, which had anciently given title to the Lords Abernethy of Saltoun, now repreſented by the Fraſers of Cowie and Philorth, Lords Abernethy of Saltoun. He was one of the ſenators of the College of Juſtices in Scotland, by the title of Lord Innerpeffer, as has been mentioned in the life of his grandſon; as well as his noble diſſent from the ſurrender of Charles I. to the Engliſh army at Newcaſtle, with Lord

Cardroſs and others; who thought the king deſerved to be puniſhed, but not by thoſe to whom he had entruſted the care of his protection.

Lord Innerpeffer was the father of Sir Robert Fletcher of Saltoun, who was the father of the patriot.

With reſpect to Fletcher's character in forſaking the Duke of Monmouth at Taunton, the following teſtimony of Ferguſon, in a MS. quoted by Echard, in his Hiſtory of England, ought to be well weighed and conſidered before Fletcher be charged with unallowable deſertion.

"The Duke of Monmouth was very ſenſible of his precipitous adventure into England; but ſuffered himſelf to be overruled, contrary to both the dictates of his judgment,

judgment, and the bias of his inclination; for could he have been allowed to have purſued his own ſentiments and reſolutions, he intended to have ſpent that ſummer in the court of Swedeland. But from this he was diverted by the importunity of the Earl of Argyll, and prevailed upon by the advice and intreaty of the Lord Grey and Mr. Wade *(contrary to the deſires of Mr. Fletcher* and Captain Matthews) to haſten into England. To which I can ſay (ſaith Mr. Ferguſon) I had the leaſt acceſſion of any who were about the Duke of Monmouth. Nor would the Earl of Argyll, after his own *ominous* haſte, ſet ſail for Scotland, till he forced a promiſe from the Duke of embarking for England within ſo many days after. Which the Duke, rather than ſuffer his honour to be ſtained,

complied

complied with as far as weather would permit; though he found the obſerving his word to interfere with his intereſt, as well as all the principles of prudence and diſcretion."—My tenderneſs for the admirers of King William, and my regard for the illuſtrious houſe of Campbell, will not allow me to expreſs what I ſuſpect in the whole of this tranſaction in Holland. Argyll paid the amende honorable with a vengeance. And the deſcendants of Monmouth need not regret the cowardice and perjury of Charles II. nor the failure of poor Monmouth's attempt. It is remarkable that the heir of Monmouth is now the eventual heir general of that very Earl of Argyll, who precipitated the ruin of his patriarch.

SPEECHES

SPEECHES of Mr. FLETCHER

On the Question for the

SETTLEMENT

of the

SCOTTISH CROWN,

Delivered in the Scottish Parliament, 1703.

My Lord Chancellor,

I AM not surprised to find an act for a supply brought into this house at the beginning of a session. I know custom has, for a long time, made it common. But, I think, experience might teach us, that such acts should be the last of every session; or lie upon the table, till all other great affairs of the nation be finished, and then only granted. It is a strange pro-

position

poſition which is uſually made in this houſe; that if we will give money to the crown, then the crown will give us good laws: as if we were to buy good laws of the crown, and pay money to our princes, that they may do their duty, and comply with their coronation oath. And yet this is not the worſt; for we have often had promiſes of good laws, and when we have given the ſums demanded, thoſe promiſes have been broken, and the nation left to ſeek a remedy; which is not to be found, unleſs we obtain the laws we want, before we give a ſupply. And if this be a ſufficient reaſon at all times to poſtpone a money-act, can we be blamed for doing ſo at this time, when the duty we owe to our country indiſpenſably obliges us to provide for the common ſafety in caſe of an event, altogether out

of

of our power, and which muſt neceſſarily diſſolve the government, unleſs we continue and ſecure it by new laws; I mean the death of her majeſty, which God in his mercy long avert? I move, therefore, that the houſe would take into conſideration what acts are neceſſary to ſecure our religion, liberty, and trade, in caſe of the ſaid event, before any act of ſupply, or other buſineſs whatever be brought into deliberation.

Act concerning offices, &c. brought in by the ſame member.

'THE eſtates of parliament taking 'into their conſideration, that, to the 'great loſs and detriment of this nation, 'great ſums of money are yearly carried

'out of it, by thoſe who wait and depend 'at court, for places and preferments in 'this kingdom: and that by Scotſmen, 'employing Engliſh intereſt at court, in 'order to obtain their ſeveral pretenſions, 'this nation is in hazard of being brought 'to depend upon Engliſh miniſters: and 'likewiſe conſidering, that by reaſon our 'princes do no more reſide amongſt us, 'they cannot be rightly informed of the 'merit of perſons pretending to places, 'offices, and penſions; therefore our ſo-'vereign lady, with advice and conſent 'of the eſtates of parliament, ſtatutes and 'ordains, that after the deceaſe of her 'majeſty, whom God long preſerve, and 'heirs of her body failing, all places and 'offices both civil and military, and all 'penſions, formerly conferred by our

kings,

'kings, ſhall ever after be given by par-
'liament, by way of ballot.'

II.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

WHEN our kings ſucceeded to the crown of England, the miniſters of that nation took a ſhort way to ruin us, by concurring with their inclinations to extend the prerogative in Scotland; and the great places and penſions conferred upon Scotſmen by that court, made them to be willing inſtruments in the work. From that time this nation began to give away their privileges one after the other, though they then ſtood more in need of having them enlarged. And as the col-

lections of our laws, before the Union of the Crowns, are full of acts to ſecure our liberty, thoſe laws that have been made ſince that time are directed chiefly to extend the prerogative. And that we might not know what rights and liberties were ſtill ours, nor be excited by the memory of what our anceſtors enjoyed, to recover thoſe we had loſt, in the two laſt editions of our acts of parliament the moſt conſiderable laws for the liberty of the ſubject are induſtriouſly and deſignedly left out. All our affairs ſince the Union of the Crowns have been managed by the advice of Engliſh miniſters, and the principal offices of the kingdom filled with ſuch men as the court of England knew would be ſubſervient to their deſigns: by which means they have had ſo viſible an influence upon our whole adminiſtration,

that

that we have, from that time, appeared to the reſt of the world more like a conquered province, than a free independent people. The account is very ſhort: whilſt our princes are not abſolute in England, they muſt be influenced by that nation, our miniſters muſt follow the directions of the prince, or loſe their places, and our places and penſions will be diſtributed according to the inclinations of a king of England, ſo long as a king of England has the diſpoſal of them: neither ſhall any man obtain the leaſt advancement, who refuſes to vote in council and parliament under that influence. So that there is no way to free this country from a ruinous dependance upon the Engliſh court, unleſs by placing the power of conferring offices and penſions in the parliament, ſo long as we ſhall have the

ſame king with England. The ancient kings of Scotland, and even thoſe of France, had not the power of conferring the chief offices of ſtate, though each of them had only one kingdom to govern, and that the difficulty we labour under, of two kingdoms which have different intereſts governed by the ſame king, did not occur. Beſides, we all know that the diſpoſal of our places and penſions is ſo conſiderable a thing to a king of England, that ſeveral of our princes, ſince the Union of the Crowns, have wiſhed to be free from the trouble of deciding between the many pretenders. That which would have given them eaſe, will give us liberty, and make us ſignificant to the common intereſt of both nations. Without this, it is impoſſible to free us from a dependence on the Engliſh court; all other re-

medies and conditions of government will prove ineffectual, as plainly appears from the nature of the thing; for who is not ſenſible of the influence of places and penſions upon all men and all affairs? If our miniſters continue to be appointed by the Engliſh court, and this nation may not be permitted to diſpoſe of the offices and places of this kingdom to balance the Engliſh bribery, they will corrupt every thing to that degree, that if any of our laws ſtand in their way they will get them repealed. Let no man ſay, that it cannot be proved, that the Engliſh court has ever beſtowed any bribe in this country. For they beſtow all offices and penſions; they bribe us, and are maſters of us at our own coſt. It is nothing but an Engliſh intereſt in this houſe, that thoſe, who wiſh well to

our country have to ſtruggle with at this time. We may, if we pleaſe, dream of other remedies; but ſo long as Scotſmen muſt go to the Engliſh court to obtain offices of truſt or profit in this kingdom, thoſe offices will always be managed with regard to the court and intereſt of England, though to the betraying of the intereſt of this nation, whenever it comes in competition with that of England. And what leſs can be expected, unleſs we reſolve to expect miracles, and that greedy, ambitious, and for the moſt part neceſſitous men, involved in great debts, burdened with great families, and having great titles to ſupport, will lay down their places, rather than comply with an Engliſh intereſt in obedience to the prince's commands? Now, to find Scotſmen oppoſing this, and willing that Engliſh miniſters,

for

for this is the caſe, ſhould have the diſpoſal of places and penſions in Scotland, rather than their own parliament, is matter of great aſtoniſhment; but that it ſhould be ſo much as a queſtion in the parliament, is altogether incomprehenſible: and if an indifferent perſon were to judge, he would certainly ſay we were an Engliſh parliament. Every man knows that princes give places and penſions by the influence of thoſe who adviſe them. So that the queſtion comes to no more than, whether this nation would be in a better condition, if, in conferring our places and penſions, the prince ſhould be determined by the parliament of Scotland, or by the miniſters of a court, that make it their intereſt to keep us low and miſerable. We all know that this is the cauſe of our poverty, miſery and dependence. But we have been

for

for a long time ſo poor, ſo miſerable, and depending, that we have neither heart nor courage, though we want not the means, to free ourſelves.

III.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

PREJUDICE and opinion govern the world, to the great diſtreſs and ruin of mankind; and though we daily find men ſo rational as to charm by the diſintereſted rectitude of their ſentiments in all other things, yet when we touch upon any wrong opinion with which they have been early prepoſſeſſed, we find them more irrational than any thing in nature; and not only not to be convinced, but obſtinately reſolved not to hear any reaſon againſt it. Theſe prejudices are yet ſtronger when

when they are taken up by great numbers of men, who confirm each other through the courſe of ſeveral generations, and ſeem to have their blood tainted, or, to ſpeak more properly, their animal ſpirits influenced by them. Of theſe deluſions, one of the ſtrongeſt, and moſt pernicious, has been a violent inclination in many men to extend the prerogative of the prince to an abſolute and unlimited power. And though, in limited monarchies, all good men profeſs and declare themſelves enemies to all tyrannical practices, yet many, even of theſe, are found ready to oppoſe ſuch neceſſary limitations as might ſecure them from the tyrannical exerciſe of power in a prince, not only ſubject to all the infirmities of other men, but, by the temptations ariſing from his power, to far greater. This humour has greatly

increaſed

increaſed in our nation, ſince the Union of the Crowns; and the ſlaviſh ſubmiſſions, which have been made neceſſary to procure the favours of the court, have cheriſhed and fomented a ſlaviſh principle. But I muſt take leave to put the repreſentatives of this nation in mind, that no ſuch principles were in this kingdom before the Union of the Crowns; and that no monarchy in Europe was more limited, nor any people more jealous of liberty than the Scots. Theſe principles were firſt introduced among us after the Union of the Crowns, and the prerogative extended to the overthrow of our ancient conſtitution, chiefly by the prelatical party; though the peeviſh, imprudent, and deteſtable conduct of the preſbyterians, who oppoſed theſe principles only in others, drove many into them, gave them greater

force,

force, and rooted them more deeply in this nation. Should we not be aſhamed to embrace opinions contrary to reaſon, and contrary to the ſentiments of our anceſtors, merely upon account of the uncharitable and inſupportable humour and ridiculous conduct of bigots of any ſort? If then no ſuch principles were in this nation, and the conſtitution of our government had greatly limited the prince's power before the Union of the Crowns; dare any man ſay he is a Scotſman, and refuſe his conſent to reduce the government of this nation, after the expiration of the intail, within the ſame limits as before that union? And if, ſince the Union of the Crowns, every one ſees that we ſtand in need of more limitations; will any man act in ſo direct an oppoſition to his own reaſon, and the undoubted

doubted intereſt of his country, as not to concur in limiting the government yet more than before the Union, particularly by the addition of this ſo neceſſary limitation for which I am now ſpeaking? My Lord, theſe are ſuch clear demonſtrations of what we ought to do in ſuch conjunctures, that all men of common ingenuity muſt be aſhamed of entering into any other meaſures. Let us not then tread in the ſteps of mean and fawning prieſts of any ſort, who are always diſpoſed to place an abſolute power in the prince, if he on his part will gratify their ambition, and by all means ſupport their form of church-government, to the perſecution of all other men, who will not comply with their impoſitions. Let us begin where our anceſtors left off before the Union of the Crowns, and be for the future,

future, more jealous of our liberties, because there is more need. But I muſt take upon me to ſay, that he who is not for ſetting great limitations upon the power of the prince, particularly that for which I am ſpeaking, in caſe we have the ſame king with England, can act by no principle, whether he be a preſbyterian, prelatical, or prerogative man, for the court of St. Germains, or that of Hanover; I ſay, he can act by no principle unleſs that of being a ſlave to the court of England for his own advantage. And therefore let not thoſe, who go under the name of prerogative-men, cover themſelves with the pretext of principles in this caſe; for ſuch men are plainly for the prerogative of the Engliſh court over this nation, becauſe this limitation is demanded

manded only in caſe we come to have the ſame king with England.

Act for the ſecurity of the kingdom, brought in by the ſame member.

'THE eſtates of parliament conſider-
'ing, that when it ſhall pleaſe God to
'afflict this nation with the death of our
'ſovereign lady the queen (whom God of
'his infinite mercy long preſerve) if the
'ſame ſhall happen to be without heirs
'of her body, this kingdom may fall into
'great confuſion and diſorder before a ſuc-
'ceſſor can be declared. For preventing
'thereof, our ſovereign lady, with advice
'and conſent of the eſtates of parliament,
'ſtatutes and ordains, that if, at the afore-
'ſaid time, any parliament or convention

of

'of eſtates ſhall be aſſembled, then the
'members of that parliament or conven-
'tion of eſtates ſhall take the adminiſtra-
'tion of the government upon them:
'excepting thoſe barons and boroughs,
'who, at the aforeſaid time, ſhall have
'any place or penſion, mediately or im-
'mediately, of the crown: whoſe com-
'miſſions are hereby declared to be void;
'and that new members ſhall be choſen
'in their place: but if there be no parlia-
'ment or convention of eſtates actually
'aſſembled, then the members of the cur-
'rent parliament ſhall aſſemble with all
'poſſible diligence: and if there be no
'current parliament, then the members
'of the laſt diſſolved parliament, or con-
'vention of eſtates, ſhall aſſemble in like
'manner: and in thoſe two laſt caſes, ſo
'ſoon as there ſhall be one hundred

'members met, in which number the ba-
'rons and boroughs before-mentioned are
'not to be reckoned, they ſhall take the
'adminiſtration of the government upon
'them: but neither they, nor the mem-
'bers of parliament or convention of
'eſtates, if at the time aforeſaid aſſem-
'bled, ſhall proceed to the weighty affair
'of naming and declaring a ſucceſſor, till
'twenty days after they have aſſumed
'the adminiſtration of the government:
'both that there may be time for all the
'other members to come to Edinburgh,
'which is hereby declared the place of
'their meeting, and for the election of
'new barons and boroughs in place above-
'mentioned. But ſo ſoon as the twenty
'days are elapſed, then they ſhall proceed
'to the publiſhing, by proclamation, the
'conditions of government, on which

'they

'they will receive the ſucceſſor to the 'imperial crown of this realm; which, 'in the caſe only of our being under the 'ſame king with England, are as follow.

1. 'That elections ſhall be made at 'every Michaelmas head-court for a new 'parliament every year: to ſit the firſt of 'November next following, and adjourn 'themſelves from time to time, till next 'Michaelmas: that they chooſe their own 'preſident, and that every thing ſhall be 'determined by balloting, in place of 'voting.

2. 'That ſo many leſſer barons ſhall 'be added to the parliament, as there 'have been noblemen created ſince the 'laſt augmentation of the number of the 'barons; and that in all time coming, for 'every nobleman that ſhall be created,

'there ſhall be a baron added to the par-
'liament.

3. 'That no man have vote in par-
'liament but a nobleman or elected
'member.

4. 'That the king ſhall give the ſanc-
'tion to all laws offered by the eſtates;
'and that the preſident of the parliament
'be impowered by his majeſty to give
'the ſanction in his abſence, and have
'ten pounds ſterling a day ſalary.

5. 'That a committee of one and
'thirty members, of which nine to be a
'quorum, choſen out of their own num-
'ber, by every parliament, ſhall, during
'the intervals of parliament, under the
'king, have the adminiſtration of the
'government, be his council, and ac-
'countable to the next parliament; with

power

'power on extraordinary occaſions to 'call the parliament together: and that 'in the ſaid council, all things be deter-'mined by balloting in place of voting.

6. 'That the king, without conſent 'of parliament, ſhall not have the power 'of making peace and war; or that of 'concluding any treaty with any other 'ſtate or potentate.

7. 'That all places and offices, both 'civil and military, and all penſions for-'merly conferred by our kings, ſhall ever 'after be given by parliament.

8. 'That no regiment or company of 'horſe, foot, or dragoons, be kept on foot 'in peace or war, but by conſent of par-'liament.

9. 'That all the fencible men of the 'nation, betwixt ſixty and ſixteen, be, 'with all diligence poſſible, armed with

'bayonets, and firelocks all of a caliber, 'and continue always provided in ſuch 'arms, with ammunition ſuitable.

10. 'That no general indemnity, nor 'pardon for any tranſgreſſion againſt the 'public, ſhall be valid without conſent 'of parliament.

11. 'That the fifteen ſenators of the 'College of Juſtice ſhall be incapable of 'being members of parliament, or of any 'other office, or any penſion: but the 'ſalary that belongs to their place to be 'increaſed as the parliament ſhall think 'fit: that the office of preſident ſhall be 'in three of their number to be named 'by parliament, and that there be no 'extraordinary lords. And alſo, that the 'lords of the juſtice-court ſhall be diſtinct 'from thoſe of the ſeſſion, and under the 'ſame reſtrictions.

12. 'That

12. 'That if any king break in upon any 'of theſe conditions of government, he 'ſhall, by the eſtates, be declared to have 'forfeited the crown.

'Which proclamation made, they are 'to go on to the naming and declaring 'a ſucceſſor: and when he is declared, 'if preſent, are to read to him the claim 'of right and conditions of government 'above-mentioned, and to deſire of him, 'that he may accept the crown accord-'ingly; and he accepting, they are to 'adminiſter to him the oath of corona-'tion: but if the ſucceſſor be not preſent, 'they are to delegate ſuch of their own 'number as they ſhall think fit, to ſee 'the ſame performed, as ſaid is: and 'are to continue in the adminiſtration 'of the government, until the ſucceſſor's 'accepting of the crown, upon the afore-

'ſaid terms, be known to them: where-
'upon having then a king at their head,
'they ſhall, by his authority, declare them-
'ſelves a parliament, and proceed to the
'doing of whatever ſhall be thought ex-
'pedient for the welfare of the realm. And
'it is likewiſe, by the authority aforeſaid,
'declared, that if her preſent majeſty
'ſhall think fit, during her own time,
'with the advice and conſent of the
'eſtates of parliament, failing heirs of her
'body, to declare a ſucceſſor, yet never-
'theleſs, after her majeſty's deceaſe, the
'members of parliament or convention
'ſhall, in the ſeveral caſes, and after the
'manner above ſpecified, meet and admit
'the ſucceſſor to the government, in the
'terms, and after the manner, as ſaid is.
'And it is hereby further declared, that
'after the deceaſe of her majeſty, and

'failing

'failing heirs of her body, the foremen-
'tioned manner and method ſhall, in the
'ſeveral caſes, be that of declaring and
'admitting to the government all thoſe
'who ſhall hereafter ſucceed to the im-
'perial crown of this realm; and that it
'ſhall be high treaſon for any man to
'own or acknowledge any perſon as king
'or queen of this realm, till they are
'declared and admitted in the above-
'mentioned manner. And laſtly, it is
'hereby declared, that by the death of
'her majeſty, or any of her ſucceſſors,
'all commiſſions, both civil and military,
'fall and are void; and that this act
'ſhall come in place of the ſeventeenth
'act of the ſixth ſeſſion of king William's
'parliament. And all acts and laws, that
'any way derogate from this preſent act,

'are

'are hereby in ſo far declared void and 'abrogated.'

IV.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

IT is the utmoſt height of human prudence to ſee and embrace every favourable opportunity: and if a word ſpoken in ſeaſon does, for the moſt part, produce wonderful effects; of what conſequence and advantage muſt it be to a nation in deliberations of the higheſt moment; in occaſions, when paſt, for ever irretrievable, to enter into the right path, and take hold of the golden opportunity which makes the moſt arduous things eaſy, and without which the moſt inconſiderable may put a ſtop to all our affairs? We

have this day an opportunity in our hands which if we manage to the advantage of the nation we have the honour to repreſent, we may, ſo far as the viciſſitude and uncertainty of human affairs will permit, be for many ages eaſy and happy. But if we deſpiſe or neglect this occaſion, we have voted our perpetual dependence on another nation. If men could always retain thoſe juſt impreſſions of things they at ſome times have upon their minds, they would be much more ſteady in their actions. And as I may boldly ſay, that no man is to be found in this houſe, who, at ſome time or other, has not had that juſt ſenſe of the miſerable condition to which this nation is reduced by a dependence upon the Engliſh court, I ſhould demand no more but the like impreſſions at this time to paſs all the limitations

mentioned

mentioned in the draught of an act I have already brought into this houſe; ſince they are not limitations upon any prince, who ſhall only be king of Scotland, nor do any way tend to ſeparate us from England; but calculated merely to this end, that ſo long as we continue to be under the ſame prince with our neighbour nation, we may be free from the influence of Engliſh councils and miniſters; that the nation may not be impoveriſhed by an expenſive attendance at court, and that the force and exerciſe of our government may be, as far as is poſſible, within ourſelves. By which means trade, manufactures, and huſbandry will flouriſh, and the affairs of the nation be no longer neglected, as they have been hitherto.

Theſe are the ends to which all the limi-

tations

tations are directed, that Engliſh councils may not hinder the acts of our parliaments from receiving the royal aſſent; that we may not be engaged without our conſent in the quarrels they may have with other nations; that they may not obſtruct the meeting of our parliaments, nor interrupt their ſitting; that we may not ſtand in need of poſting to London for places and penſions, by which, whatever particular men may get, the nation muſt always be a loſer; nor apply for the remedies of our grievances to a court, where, for the moſt part, none are to be had. On the contrary, if theſe conditions of government be enacted, our conſtitution will be amended, and our grievances be eaſily redreſſed by a due execution of our own laws, which to this day we have never been able to obtain. The beſt and

wiſeſt

wiſeſt men in England will be glad to hear that theſe limitations are ſettled by us. For though the ambition of courtiers lead them to deſire an uncontroulable power at any rate; yet wiſer men will conſider, that when two nations live under the ſame prince, the condition of the one cannot be made intolerable, but a ſeparation muſt inevitably follow, which will be dangerous if not deſtructive to both. The ſenate of Rome wiſely determined in the buſineſs of the Privernates, that all people would take hold of the firſt opportunity to free themſelves from an uneaſy condition; that no peace could be laſting, in which both parties did not find their account; and that no alliance was ſtrong enough to keep two nations in amity, if the condition of either were made worſe by it. For my own part,

my

my lord chancellor, before I will conſent to continue in our preſent miſerable and languiſhing condition after the deceaſe of her majeſty, and heirs of her body failing, I ſhall rather give my vote for a ſeparation from England at any rate. I hope no man, who is now poſſeſſed of an office, will take umbrage at theſe conditions of government, though ſome of them ſeem to diminiſh, and others do entirely ſuppreſs the place he poſſeſſes: for beſides the ſcandal of preferring a private intereſt before that of our country, theſe limitations are not to take place immediately. The queen is yet young, and by the grace of God may live many years, I hope longer than all thoſe ſhe has placed in any truſt; and ſhould we not be happy, if thoſe who, for the future, may deſign to recommend themſelves for any office,

could

could not do it by any other way than the favour of this houſe, which they who appear for theſe conditions well deſerve in a more eminent degree? Would we rather court an Engliſh miniſter for a place than a parliament of Scotland? Are we afraid of being taken out of the hands of Engliſh courtiers, and left to govern ourſelves? And do we doubt whether an Engliſh miniſtry or a Scots parliament will be moſt for the intereſt of Scotland? But that which ſeems moſt difficult in this queſtion, and in which if ſatisfaction be given, I hope no man will pretend to be diſſatisfied with theſe limitations, is the intereſt of a king of Great Britain. And here I ſhall take liberty to ſay, that as the limitations do no way affect any prince that may be king of Scotland only, ſo they will be found highly advantageous

to a king of Great Britain. Some of our late kings, when they have been perplexed about the affairs of Scotland, did let fall ſuch expreſſions as intimated they thought them not worth their application. And indeed we ought not to wonder if princes, like other men, ſhould grow weary of toiling where they find no advantage. But to ſet this affair in a true light: I deſire to know, whether it can be more advantageous to a king of Great Britain to have an unlimited prerogative over this country, in our preſent ill condition, which turns to no account, than that this nation, grown rich and powerful under theſe conditions of government, ſhould be able upon any emergency to furniſh a good body of land forces, with a ſquadron of ſhips for war, all paid by ourſelves, to aſſiſt his majeſty in the wars

he may undertake for the defence of the proteſtant religion and liberties of Europe. Now, ſince I hope I have ſhewn, that thoſe who are for the prerogative of the kings of Scotland, and all thoſe who are poſſeſſed of places at this time, together with the whole Engliſh nation, as well as a king of Great Britain, have cauſe to be ſatisfied with theſe regulations of government, I would know what difficulty can remain; unleſs that, being accuſtomed to live in a dependency, and unacquainted with liberty, we know not ſo much as the meaning of the word; nor, if that ſhould be explained to us, can ever perſuade ourſelves we ſhall obtain the thing, though we have it in our power, by a few votes, to ſet ourſelves and our poſterity free. To ſay that this will ſtop at the royal aſſent, is a ſuggeſtion diſreſpectful to her majeſty,

and

and which ought neither to be mentioned in parliament, nor be conſidered by any member of this houſe. And, were this a proper time, I am confident I could ſay ſuch things as, being repreſented to the queen, would convince her, that no perſon can have greater intereſt, nor obtain more laſting honour, by the enacting of theſe conditions of government, than her majeſty. And if the nation be aſſiſted in this exigency by the good offices of his grace the high commiſſioner, I ſhall not doubt to affirm, that in procuring this bleſſing to our country from her majeſty, he will do more for us, than all the great men of that noble family, of which he is deſcended, ever did; though it ſeems to have been their peculiar province for divers ages, to defend the liberties of this nation againſt the power of the Engliſh

and the deceit of courtiers. What further arguments can I uſe to perſuade this houſe to enact theſe limitations, and embrace this occaſion, which we have ſo little deſerved? I might bring many; but the moſt proper and effectual to perſuade all, I take to be this: that our anceſtors did enjoy the moſt eſſential liberties contained in the act I propoſed: and though ſome few of leſs moment are among them which they had not, yet they were in poſſeſſion of divers others not contained in theſe articles: that they enjoyed theſe privileges when they were ſeparated from England, had their prince living among them, and conſequently ſtood not in ſo great need of theſe limitations. Now, ſince we have been under the ſame prince with England, and therefore ſtand in the greateſt need of them, we have not only neglected

neglected to make a due proviſion of that kind, but in divers parliaments have given away our liberties, and upon the matter ſubjected this crown to the court of England; and are become ſo accuſtomed to depend on them, that we ſeem to doubt whether we ſhall lay hold of this happy opportunity to reſume our freedom. If nothing elſe will move us, at leaſt let us not act in oppoſition to the light of our own reaſon and conſcience, which daily repreſents to us the ill conſtitution of our government, the low condition into which we are ſunk, and the extreme poverty, diſtreſs, and miſery of our people. Let us conſider whether we will have the nation continue in theſe deplorable circumſtances, and loſe this opportunity of bringing freedom and plenty among us. Sure the heart of every honeſt man muſt bleed daily, to

ſee the miſery in which our commons, and even many of our gentry, live; which has no other cauſe but the ill conſtitution of our government, and our bad government no other root but our dependence upon the court of England. If our kings lived among us, it would not be ſtrange to find theſe limitations rejected. It is not the prerogative of a king of Scotland I would diminiſh, but the prerogative of Engliſh miniſters over this nation. To conclude, theſe conditions of government being either ſuch as our anceſtors enjoyed, or principally directed to cut off our dependence on an Engliſh court, and not to take place during the life of the queen; he who refuſes his conſent to them, whatever he may be by birth, cannot ſure be a Scotſman by affection. This will be a true teſt to diſtinguiſh, not whig from tory,

preſbyterian from epiſcopal, Hanover from St. Germains, nor yet a courtier from a man out of place; but a proper teſt to diſtinguiſh a friend from an enemy to his country. And indeed we are ſplit into ſo many parties, and cover ourſelves with ſo many falſe pretexts, that ſuch a teſt ſeems neceſſary to bring us into the light, and ſhew every man in his own colours. In a word, my lord chancellor, we are to conſider, that though we ſuffer under many grievances, yet our dependence upon the court of England is the cauſe of all, comprehends them all, and is the band that ties up the bundle. If we break this, they will all drop and fall to the ground: if not, this band will ſtraiten us more and more, till we ſhall be no longer a people.

I therefore humbly propoſe, that, for the ſecurity of our religion, liberty, and

trade, theſe limitations be declared, by a reſolution of this houſe, to be the conditions, upon which the nation will receive a ſucceſſor to the crown of this realm, after the deceaſe of her preſent majeſty, and failing heirs of her body, in caſe the ſaid ſucceſſor ſhall be alſo king or queen of England.

V.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

I AM ſorry to hear what has been juſt now ſpoken from the throne. I know the duty I owe to her majeſty, and the reſpect that is due to her commiſſioner; and therefore ſhall ſpeak with a juſt regard to both. But the duty I owe to my country obliges me to ſay, that what we have now heard from the throne, muſt of neceſſity

proceed from Engliſh councils. If we had demanded, that theſe limitations ſhould take place during the life of her majeſty, or of the heirs of her body, perhaps we might have no great reaſon to complain, though they ſhould be refuſed. But that her majeſty ſhould prefer the prerogative of ſhe knows not who, to the happineſs of the whole people of Scotland; that ſhe ſhould deny her aſſent to ſuch conditions of government as are not limitations upon the crown of Scotland, but only ſuch as are abſolutely neceſſary to relieve us from a ſubjection to the court of England, muſt proceed from Engliſh councils; as well becauſe there is no Scots miniſter now at London, as becauſe I have had an account, which I believe to be too well grounded, that a letter to this effect has been ſent down hither by the lord treaſurer

ſurer of England, not many days ago. Beſides, all men who have lately been at London well know, that nothing has been more common, than to ſee Scotſmen of the ſeveral parties addreſſing themſelves to Engliſh miniſters about Scots affairs; and even to ſome ladies of that court, whom, for the reſpect I bear to their relations, I ſhall not name. Now, whether we ſhall continue under the influence and ſubjection of the Engliſh court; or whether it be not high time to lay before her majeſty, by a vote of this houſe, the conditions of government upon which we will receive a ſucceſſor, I leave to the wiſdom of the parliament. This I muſt ſay, that to tell us any thing of her majeſty's intentions in this affair, before we have preſented any act to that purpoſe for the royal aſſent, is to prejudge the cauſe,

and

and altogether unparliamentary. I will add, that nothing has ever ſhewn the power and force of Engliſh councils upon our affairs in a more eminent manner at any time, ſince the union of the crowns. No man in this houſe is more convinced of the great advantage of that peace which both nations enjoy by living under one prince. But as, on the one hand, ſome men, for private ends, and in order to get into offices, have either neglected or betrayed the intereſt of this nation, by a mean compliance with the Engliſh court; ſo on the other ſide it cannot be denied, that we have been but indifferently uſed by the Engliſh nation. I ſhall not inſiſt upon the affair of Darien, in which, by their means and influence chiefly, we ſuffered ſo great a loſs both in men and money, as to put us almoſt beyond hope

of

of ever having any conſiderable trade; and this contrary to their own true intereſt, which now appears but too viſibly. I ſhall not go about to enumerate inſtances of a provoking nature in other matters, but keep myſelf preciſely to the thing we are upon. The Engliſh nation did, ſome time paſt, take into conſideration the nomination of a ſucceſſor to that crown; an affair of the higheſt importance, and, one would think, of common concernment to both kingdoms. Did they ever require our concurrence? Did they ever deſire the late king to cauſe the parliament of Scotland to meet, in order to take our advice and conſent? Was not this to tell us plainly, that we ought to be concluded by their determinations, and were not worthy to be conſulted in the matter? Indeed, my lord chancellor, conſidering

their

their whole carriage in this affair, and the broad inſinuations we have now heard, that we are not to expect her majeſty's aſſent to any limitations on a ſucceſſor (which muſt proceed from Engliſh councils), and conſidering we cannot propoſe to ourſelves any other relief from that ſervitude we lie under by the influence of that court; it is my opinion, that the houſe come to a reſolution, *That after the deceaſe of her majeſty, heirs of her body failing, we will ſeparate our crown from that of England.*

VI.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

THAT there ſhould be limitations on a ſucceſſor, in order to take away our dependence on the court of England, if both nations

nations ſhould have the ſame king, no man here ſeems to oppoſe. And I think very few will be of opinion, that ſuch limitations ſhould be deferred till the meeting of the nation's repreſentatives upon the deceaſe of her majeſty. For if the ſucceſſor be not named before that time, every one will be ſo earneſt to promote the pretenſions of the perſon he moſt affects, that new conditions will be altogether forgotten. So that thoſe who are only in appearance for theſe limitations, and in reality againſt them, endeavour for their laſt refuge to miſlead well-meaning men, by telling them, that it is not adviſable to put them into the act of ſecurity, as well for fear of loſing all, as becauſe they will be more conveniently placed in a ſeparate act. My lord chancellor, I would fain know if any thing can be more

more proper in an act which appoints the naming and manner of admitting a ſucceſſor, than the conditions on which we agree to receive him. I would know, if the deferring of any thing, at a time when naturally it ſhould take place, be not to put a ſlur upon it, and an endeavour to defeat it. And if the limitations in queſtion are pretended to be ſuch a burden in the act, as to hazard the loſs of the whole, can we expect to obtain them when ſeparated from the act? Is there any common ſenſe in this? Let us not deceive ourſelves, and imagine that the act of 1696 does not expire immediately after the queen and heirs of her body; for in all that act, the heirs and ſucceſſors of his late majeſty king William are always reſtrained and ſpecified by theſe expreſs words, 'according to the declaration of the eſtates, 'dated

'dated the 11th of April 1689.' So that, unleſs we make a due proviſion by ſome new law, a diſſolution of the government will enſue immediately upon the death of her majeſty, failing heirs of her body. Such an act therefore being of abſolute and indiſpenſable neceſſity, I am of opinion, that the limitations ought to be inſerted therein as the only proper place for them, and ſureſt way to obtain them: and that whoever would ſeparate them, does not ſo much deſire we ſhould obtain the act, as that we ſhould loſe the limitations.

VII.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

I HOPE I need not inform this honourable houſe, that all acts which can be propoſed

poſed for the ſecurity of this kingdom, are vain and empty propoſitions, unleſs they are ſupported by arms; and that to rely upon any law, without ſuch a ſecurity, is to lean upon a ſhadow. We had better never paſs this act: for then we ſhall not imagine we have done any thing for our ſecurity; and if we think we can do any thing effectual without that proviſion, we deceive ourſelves, and are in a moſt dangerous condition. Such an act cannot be ſaid to be an act for the ſecurity of any thing, in which the moſt neceſſary clauſe is wanting, and without which all the reſt is of no force; neither can any kingdom be really ſecured but by arming the people. Let no man pretend that we have ſtanding forces to ſupport this law; and that, if their numbers be not ſufficient, we may raiſe more. It is very well known

this nation cannot maintain ſo many ſtanding forces as would be neceſſary for our defence, though we could entirely rely upon their fidelity. The poſſeſſion of arms is the diſtinction of a freeman from a ſlave. He who has nothing, and belongs to another, muſt be defended by him, and needs no arms: but he who thinks he is his own maſter, and has any thing he may call his own, ought to have arms to defend himſelf and what he poſſeſſes, or elſe he lives precariouſly and at diſcretion. And though for a while thoſe who have the ſword in their power abſtain from doing him injuries; yet, by degrees, he will be awed into a ſubmiſſion to every arbitrary command. Our anceſtors, by being always armed, and frequently in action, defended themſelves againſt the Romans, Danes, and Engliſh; and maintained their

liberty

liberty againſt the incroachments of their own princes. If we are not rich enough to pay a ſufficient number of ſtanding forces, we have at leaſt this advantage, that arms in our own hands ſerve no leſs to maintain our liberty at home, than to defend us from enemies abroad. Other nations, if they think they can truſt ſtanding forces, may, by their means, defend themſelves againſt foreign enemies. But we, who have not wealth ſufficient to pay ſuch forces, ſhould not, of all nations under heaven, be unarmed. For us then to continue without arms, is to be directly in the condition of ſlaves: to be found unarmed, in the event of her majeſty's death, would be to have no manner of ſecurity for our liberty, property, or the independence of this kingdom. By being unarmed, we every day run the riſk of our

all, ſince we know not how ſoon that event may overtake us: to continue ſtill unarmed, when, by this very act now under deliberation, we have put a caſe, which happening may ſeparate us from England, would be the groſſeſt of all follies. And if we do not provide for arming the kingdom in ſuch an exigency, we ſhall become a jeſt and a proverb to the world.

VIII.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

IF in the ſad event of her majeſty's deceaſe without heirs of her body, any conſiderable military force ſhould be in the hands of one or more men, who might have an underſtanding together, we are not very ſure what uſe they would make of

of them in ſo nice and critical a conjuncture. We know, that as the moſt juſt and honourable enterpriſes, when they fail, are accounted in the number of rebellions; ſo all attempts, however unjuſt, if they ſucceed, always purge themſelves of all guilt and imputation. If a man preſume he ſhall have ſucceſs, and obtain the utmoſt of his hopes, he will not too nicely examine the point of right, nor balance too ſcrupulouſly the injury he does to his country. I would not have any man take this for a reflection upon thoſe honourable perſons, who have at preſent the command of our troops. For, beſides that we are not certain who ſhall be in thoſe commands at the time of ſuch an event, we are to know that all men are frail, and the wicked and mean-ſpirited world has paid too much honour to many,

who have ſubverted the liberties of their country. We ſee a great diſpoſition at this time in ſome men, not to conſent to any limitations on a ſucceſſor, though we ſhould name the ſame with England. And therefore ſince this is probably the laſt opportunity we ſhall ever have of freeing ourſelves from our dependence on the Engliſh court, we ought to manage it with the utmoſt jealouſy and diffidence of ſuch men. For though we have ordered the nation to be armed and exerciſed, which will be a ſufficient defence when done; yet we know not but the event, which God avert, may happen before this can be effected. And we may eaſily imagine, what a few bold men, at the head of a ſmall number of regular troops, might do, when all things are in confuſion and ſuſpenſe. So that we ought

to make effectual proviſion, with the utmoſt circumſpection, that all ſuch forces may be ſubſervient to the government and intereſt of this nation, and not to the private ambition of their commanders. I therefore move, that immediately upon the deceaſe of her majeſty, all military commiſſions above that of a captain be null and void.

IX.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

I KNOW it is the undoubted prerogative of her majeſty, that no act of this houſe ſhall have the force of a law without her royal aſſent. And as I am confident his grace the high commiſſioner is ſufficiently inſtructed, to give that aſſent to

every act which ſhall be laid before him; ſo more particularly to the act for the ſecurity of the kingdom, which has already paſſed this houſe: an act that preſerves us from anarchy: an act that arms a defenceleſs people: an act that has coſt the repreſentatives of this kingdom much time and labour to frame, and the nation a very great expence: an act that has paſſed by a great majority: and above all, an act that contains a caution of the higheſt importance for the amendment of our conſtitution. I did not preſume the other day, immediately after this act was voted, to deſire the royal aſſent; I thought it a juſt deference to the high commiſſioner, not to mention it at that time. Neither would I now, but only that I may have an opportunity to repreſent to his grace, that as he who gives readily doubles the gift; ſo his

grace

grace has now in his hands the moſt glorious and honourable occaſion, that any perſon of this nation ever had, of making himſelf acceptable, and his memory for ever grateful to the people of this kingdom: ſince the honour of giving the royal aſſent to a law, which lays a laſting foundation for their liberties, has been reſerved to him.

X.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

ON the day that the act for the ſecurity of the kingdom paſſed in this houſe, I did not preſume to move for the royal aſſent. The next day of our meeting, I mentioned it with all imaginable reſpect and deference, for his grace the high commiſſioner,

miſſioner, and divers honourable perſons ſeconded me. If now, after the noble lord who ſpoke laſt, I inſiſt upon it, I think I am no way to be blamed. I ſhall not endeavour to ſhew the neceſſity of this act, in which the whole ſecurity of the nation now lies, having ſpoken to that point the other day: but ſhall take occaſion to ſay ſomething concerning the delay of giving the royal aſſent to acts paſſed in this houſe; for which I could never hear a good reaſon, except that a commiſſioner was not ſufficiently inſtructed. But that cannot be the true reaſon at this time, becauſe ſeveral acts have lain long for the royal aſſent: in particular, that to ratify a former act, for turning the convention into a parliament, and fencing the claim of right, which no man doubts his grace is ſufficiently

ciently inſtructed to paſs. We muſt therefore look elſewhere for the reaſon of this delay, and ought to be excuſed in doing this; ſince ſo little regard is had, and ſo little ſatisfaction given to the repreſentatives of this nation, who have for more than three months employed themſelves with the greateſt aſſiduity in the ſervice of their country, and yet have not ſeen the leaſt fruit of their labours crowned with the royal aſſent. Only one act has been touched, for recognizing her majeſty's juſt right, which is a thing of courſe. This gives but too good reaſon to thoſe who ſpeak freely, to ſay that the royal aſſent is induſtriouſly ſuſpended, in order to oblige ſome men to vote, as ſhall be moſt expedient to a certain intereſt; and that this ſeſſion of parliament is continued ſo long, chiefly to make men uneaſy, who

have

have neither places nor penſions to bear their charges; that by this means acts for money, importation of French wine, and the like, may paſs in a thin houſe, which will not fail immediately to receive the royal aſſent, whilſt the acts that concern the welfare, and perhaps the very being of the nation, remain untouched.

XI.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

BEING under ſome apprehenſions that her majeſty may receive ill advice in this affair, from miniſters who frequently miſtake former bad practices for good precedents, I deſire that the third act of the firſt ſeſſion of the firſt parliament of king Charles the Second may be read.

Act

Act the third of the firſt ſeſſion, Par. I. Car. II.

Act aſſerting his majeſty's royal prerogative, in calling and diſſolving of parliaments, and making of laws.

'THE eſtates of parliament, now con-
'vened by his majeſty's ſpecial authority,
'conſidering that the quietneſs, ſtability,
'and happineſs of the people, do depend
'upon the ſafety of the king's majeſty's
'ſacred perſon, and the maintenance of
'his ſovereign authority, princely power,
'and prerogative royal; and conceiving
'themſelves obliged in conſcience, and
'in diſcharge of their duties to almighty
'God, to the king's majeſty, and to their
'native country, to make a due acknow-
'ledgment thereof at this time, do there-
'fore unanimouſly declare, that they will,

'with

'with their lives and fortunes, maintain
'and defend the ſame. And they do
'hereby acknowledge, that the power of
'calling, holding, proroguing, and diſ-
'ſolving of parliaments, and all conven-
'tions and meetings of the eſtates does
'ſolely reſide in the king's majeſty, his
'heirs and ſucceſſors. And that as no
'parliament can be lawfully kept, without
'the ſpecial warrant and preſence of the
'king's majeſty, or his commiſſioner;
'ſo no acts, ſentences or ſtatutes, to be
'paſſed in parliament, can be binding
'upon the people, or have the authority
'and force of laws, without the ſpecial
'authority and approbation of the king's
'majeſty, or his commiſſioner interponed
'thereto, at the making thereof. And
'therefore the king's majeſty, with ad-
'vice and conſent of his eſtates of parlia-
'ment,

'ment, doth hereby reſcind and annul all 'laws, acts, ſtatutes, or practices that have 'been, or upon any pretext whatſoever 'may be, or ſeem contrary to, or incon-'ſiſtent with, his majeſty's juſt power 'and prerogative above-mentioned; and 'declares the ſame to have been unlaw-'ful, and to be void and null in all 'time coming. And to the end that 'this act and acknowledgment, which 'the eſtates of parliament, from the ſenſe 'of their humble duty and certain know-'ledge, have hereby made, may receive 'the more exact obedience in time coming; 'it is by his majeſty, with advice afore-'ſaid, ſtatute and ordained, that the punc-'tual obſervance thereof be ſpecially re-'garded by all his majeſty's ſubjects, and 'that none of them, upon any pretext 'whatſoever, offer to call in queſtion, im-

pugn,

'pugn, or do any deed to the contrary 'hereof, under pain of treaſon.'

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

THE queſtions concerning the king's prerogative and the people's privileges are nice and difficult. Mr. William Colvin, who was one of the wiſeſt men this nation ever had, uſed to ſay concerning defenſive arms, that he wiſhed all princes thought them lawful, and the people unlawful. And indeed I heartily wiſh, that ſomething like theſe moderate ſentiments might always determine all matters in queſtion between both. By the conſtitution of this kingdom, no act of the eſtates had the force of a law, unleſs touched by the king's ſceptre, which was his undoubted prerogative. The touch of his ſceptre gave authority to our laws, as his

his ſtamp did a currency to our coin: but he had no right to refuſe or with-hold either. It is pretended by ſome men, that, in virtue of this act, the king may refuſe the royal aſſent to acts paſſed by the eſtates of the kingdom. But it ought to be conſidered, that this law is only an acknowledgment and declaration of the king's prerogative, and conſequently gives nothing new to the prince. The act acknowledges this to be the prerogative of the king, that whatever is paſſed in this houſe, cannot have the force of a law without the royal aſſent, and makes it high treaſon to queſtion this prerogative; becauſe the parliament, during the civil war, had uſurped a power of impoſing their own votes upon the people for law, though neither the king, nor any perſon commiſſionated by him were preſent: and

this new law was wholly and ſimply directed to aboliſh and reſcind that uſurpation, as appears by the tenour and expreſs words of the act; which does neither acknowledge nor declare, that the prince has a power to refuſe the royal aſſent to any act preſented by the parliament. If any one ſhould ſay, that the lawgivers deſigned no leſs, and that the principal contrivers and promoters of the act frequently boaſted they had obtained the negative, as they call it, for the crown; I deſire to know how they will make that appear, ſince no words are to be found in the act, that ſhew any ſuch deſign: eſpecially if we conſider that this law was made by a parliament that ſpoke the moſt plainly, leaſt equivocally, and moſt fully of all others concerning the prerogative. And if thoſe who promoted the paſſing of

this

this act were under ſo ſtrong a deluſion, to think they had obtained a new and great prerogative to the crown by a declaratory law, in which there is not one word to that purpoſe, it was the hand of Heaven that defeated their deſign of deſtroying the liberty of their country. I know our princes have refuſed their aſſent to ſome acts ſince the making of this law: but a practice introduced in arbitrary times can deſerve no conſideration. For my own part, I am far from puſhing things to extremity on either hand: I heartily enter into the ſentiments of the wiſe man I mentioned before, and think the people of this nation might have been happy in miſtaking the meaning of this law, if ſuch men, as have had the greateſt credit with our princes, would have let them into the true ſenſe of it. And therefore thoſe,

who have the honour to adviſe her majeſty, ſhould beware of inducing her to a refuſal of the royal aſſent to the act for the ſecurity of the kingdom, becauſe the unwarrantable cuſtom of rejecting acts was introduced in arbitrary times.

XII.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

IT is often ſaid in this houſe, that parliaments, and eſpecially long ſeſſions of parliament, are a heavy tax and burden to this nation: I ſuppoſe they mean as things are uſually managed: otherwiſe I ſhould think it a great reflection on the wiſdom of the nation, and a maxim very pernicious to our government. But indeed in the preſent ſtate of things, they are a very great burden to us. Our parliament

liament ſeldom meets in winter, when the ſeaſon of the year, and our own private affairs, bring us to town. We are called together for the moſt part in ſummer, when our country buſineſs, and the goodneſs of the ſeaſon, make us live in town with regret. Our parliaments are ſitting both in ſeed time and harveſt, and we are made to toil the whole year. We meet one day in three; though no reaſon can be given why we ſhould not meet every day, unleſs ſuch a one as I am unwilling to name, leſt thereby occaſion ſhould be taken to mention it elſewhere to the reproach of the nation. The expences of our commiſſioners are now become greater than thoſe of our kings formerly were: and a great part of this money is laid out upon equipage, and other things of foreign manufacture, to the great damage of the king-

dom. We meet in this place in the afternoon, after a great dinner, which I think is not the time of doing buſineſs; and are in ſuch confuſion after the candles are lighted, that very often the debate of one ſingle point cannot be finiſhed; but muſt be put off to another day. Parliaments are forced to ſubmit to the conveniences of the lords of the ſeſſion, and meetings of the boroughs; though no good reaſon can be given, why either a lord of the ſeſſion, or any one deputed to the meetings of the boroughs, ſhould be a member of this houſe; but, on the contrary, experience has taught us the inconvenience of both. When members of parliament, to perform the duty they owe to their country, have left the moſt important affairs, and quitted their friends many times in the utmoſt extremity, to be preſent at this

this place, they are told they may return again; as we were the other day called together only in order to be diſmiſſed. We have been for ſeveral days adjourned in this time of harveſt, when we had the moſt important affairs under deliberation; that as well thoſe, who have neither place nor penſion, might grow weary of their attendance, as thoſe whoſe ill ſtate of health makes the ſervice of their country as dangerous, though no leſs honourable than if they ſerved in the field. Do not theſe things ſhew us the neceſſity of thoſe limitations I had the honour to offer to this houſe? and particularly of that for lodging the power of adjournments in the parliament; that for meetings of parliament to be in winter; that for impowering the preſident to give the royal aſſent, and aſcertaining his ſalary; with that for ex-

cluding all lords of the ſeſſion from being members of parliament? Could one imagine that in this parliament, in which we have had the firſt opportunity of amending our conſtitution by new conditions of government, occaſion ſhould be given by reiterating former abuſes, to convince all men of the neceſſity of farther limitations upon a ſucceſſor? Or is not this rather to be attributed to a peculiar providence, that thoſe who are the great oppoſers of limitations, ſhould, by their conduct, give the beſt reaſon for them? But I hope no member of this houſe will be diſcouraged either by delay or oppoſition; becauſe the liberties of a people are not to be maintained without paſſing through great difficulties, and that no toil and labours ought to be declined to preſerve a nation from ſlavery.

XIII.

XIII.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

I HAVE waited long and with great patience for the reſult of this ſeſſion, to ſee if I could diſcover a real and ſincere intention in the members of this houſe, to reſtore the freedom of our country in this great and, perhaps, only opportunity. I know there are many different views among us, and all men pretend the good of the nation. But every man here is obliged carefully to examine the things before us, and to act according to his knowledge and conſcience, without regard to the views of other men, whatever charity he may have for them: I ſay, every man in this place is obliged, by the

oath

oath he has taken, to give ſuch advice as he thinks moſt expedient for the good of his country. The principal buſineſs of this ſeſſion has been the forming of an act for the ſecurity of the kingdom, upon the expiration of the preſent entail of the crown. And though one would have thought, that the moſt eſſential thing which could have entered into ſuch an act, had been to aſcertain the conditions on which the nation would receive a ſucceſſor, yet this has been entirely waved and over-ruled by the houſe. Only there is a caution inſerted in the act, that the ſucceſſor ſhall not be the ſame perſon who is to ſucceed in England, unleſs ſuch conditions of government be firſt enacted, as may ſecure the freedom of this nation. But this is a general and indefinite clauſe, and liable to the dangerous inconveniency

of being declared to be fulfilled by giving us two or three inconſiderable laws. So that this ſeſſion of parliament, in which we have had ſo great an opportunity of making ourſelves for ever a free people, is like to terminate without any real ſecurity for our liberties, or any eſſential amendant of our conſtitution. And now, when we ought to come to particulars, and enact ſuch limitations as may fully ſatisfy the general clauſe, we muſt amuſe ourſelves with things of little ſignificancy, and hardly mention any limitation of moment or conſequence. But inſtead of this, acts are brought in for regulations to take place during the life of the queen, which we are not to expect, and quite draw us off from the buſineſs we ſhould attend. By theſe methods divers well-meaning men have been deluded, whilſt others

have

have propoſed a preſent nomination of a ſucceſſor under limitations. But I fear the far greater part have deſigned to make their court either to her majeſty, the houſe of Hanover, or thoſe of St. Germains, by maintaining the prerogative in Scotland as high as ever, to the perpetual enſlaving of this nation to the miniſters of England. Therefore I, who have never made court to any prince, and I hope never ſhall, at the rate of the leaſt prejudice to my country, think myſelf obliged, in diſcharge of my conſcience, and the duty of my oath in parliament, to offer ſuch limitations as may anſwer the general clauſe in the act for the ſecurity of the kingdom. And this I do in two draughts, the one containing the limitations by themſelves; the other with the ſame limitations, and a blank for inſerting the name

of

of a ſucceſſor. If the houſe ſhall think fit to take into conſideration that draught which has no blank, and enact the limitations, I ſhall reſt ſatisfied, being as little fond of naming a ſucceſſor as any man. Otherwiſe, I offer the draught with a blank; to the end that every man may make his court to the perſon he moſt affects; and hope by this means to pleaſe all parties: the court, in offering them an opportunity to name the ſucceſſor of England, a thing ſo acceptable to her majeſty and that nation: thoſe who may favour the court of St. Germains, by giving them a chance for their pretenſions; and every true Scotſman, in vindicating the liberty of this nation, whoever be the ſucceſſor.

FIRST

FIRST DRAUGHT.

'OUR ſovereign lady, with advice and 'conſent of the eſtates of parliament, ſta- 'tutes and ordains, that after the deceaſe 'of her majeſty, whom God long pre- 'ſerve, and failing heirs of her body, no 'one ſhall ſucceed to the crown of this 'realm that is likewiſe ſucceſſor to the 'crown of England, but under the limi- 'tations following, which, together with 'the oath of coronation and claim of 'right, they ſhall ſwear to obſerve. That 'all places and offices, both civil and mili- 'tary, and all penſions formerly conferred 'by our kings, ſhall ever after be given 'by parliament.—That a new parliament 'ſhall be choſen every Michaelmas head-

'court,

'court, to ſit the firſt of November there-
'after, and adjourn themſelves from time
'to time till next Michaelmas; and that
'they chooſe their own preſident.—That a
'committee of thirty-ſix members, choſen
'by and out of the whole parliament,
'without diſtinction of eſtates, ſhall, dur-
'ing the intervals of parliament, under the
'king, have the adminiſtration of the
'government, be his council, and account-
'able to parliament; with power, in ex-
'traordinary occaſions, to call the parlia-
'ment together.'

SECOND DRAUGHT.

'OUR ſovereign lady, with advice and
'conſent of the eſtates of parliament, ſta-
'tutes and ordains, that after the deceaſe

'of her majeſty, whom God long pre-
'ſerve, and heirs of her body failing,
'ſhall ſucceed to the
'crown of this realm. But that in caſe
'the ſaid ſucceſſor be likewiſe the ſuc-
'ceſſor to the crown of England, the
'ſaid ſucceſſor ſhall be under the limita-
'tions following,' &c.

No man can be an enemy to theſe limitations, in caſe we have the ſame king with England, except he who is ſo ſhameleſs a partiſan either of the court at St. Germains, or the houſe of Hanover, that he would rather ſee Scotland continue to depend upon an Engliſh miniſtry, than that their prerogative ſhould be any way leſſened in this kingdom. As for thoſe who have St. Germains in their view, and are accounted the higheſt of all the prerogative-

rogative-men, I would aſk them, if we ſhould aſſiſt them in advancing their prince to the throne of Great Britain, are we, for our reward, to continue ſtill in our former dependence on the Engliſh court? Theſe limitations are the only teſt to diſcover a lover of his country from a courtier either to her majeſty, Hanover, or St. Germains. For prerogative men, who are for enſlaving this nation to the directions of another court, are courtiers to any ſucceſſor; and let them pretend what they will, if their principles lead neceſſarily to ſubject this nation to another, are enemies to the nation. Theſe men are ſo abſurd as to provoke England, and yet reſolve to continue ſlaves of that court. This country muſt be made a field of blood, in order to advance a papiſt to the throne of Britain. If we fail, we ſhall be ſlaves by right of

conqueſt; if we prevail, have the happineſs to continue in our former ſlaviſh dependence. And though to break this yoke, all good men would venture their all, yet I believe few will be willing to lie at the mercy of France and popery, and at the ſame time draw upon themſelves the indignation and power of England, for the ſake only of meaſuring our ſtrength with a much more powerful nation; and to be ſure to continue ſtill under our former dependence, though we ſhould happen to prevail. Now, of thoſe who are for the ſame ſucceſſor with England, I would aſk, if in that caſe we are not alſo to continue in our former dependence; which will not fail always to grow from bad to worſe, and at length become more intolerable to all honeſt men, than death itſelf. For my own part, I think, that even the moſt zealous

zealous proteſtant in the nation, if he have a true regard for his country, ought rather to wiſh, were it conſiſtent with our claim of right, that a papiſt ſhould ſucceed to the throne of Great Britain, under ſuch limitations as would render this nation free and independent, than the moſt proteſtant and beſt prince, without any. If we may live free, I little value who is king: it is indifferent to me, provided the limitations be enacted, to name or not name; Hanover, St Germains, or whom you will.

XIV.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

HIS grace, the high commiſſioner, having acquainted this houſe, that he has inſtructions from her majeſty, to give the

royal aſſent to all acts paſſed in this ſeſſion, except that for the ſecurity of the kingdom, it will be highly neceſſary to provide ſome new laws for ſecuring our liberty upon the expiration of the preſent entail of the crown. And therefore I ſhall ſpeak to the firſt article of the limitations contained in the ſhort act I offered the other day; not only becauſe it is the firſt in order, but becauſe I perſuade myſelf you all know that parliaments were formerly choſen annually; that they had the power of appointing the times of their meetings and adjournments, together with the nomination of committees to ſuperintend the adminiſtration of the government during the intervals of parliament: all which, if it were neceſſary, might be proved by a great number of public acts. So that if I demonſtrate the uſe and neceſſity

ceſſity of the firſt article, there will remain no great difficulty concerning the reſt.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

THE condition of a people, however unhappy, if they not only know the cauſe of their miſery, but have alſo the remedy in their power, and yet ſhould refuſe to apply it, one would think, were not to be pitied. And though the condition of good men, who are concluded and oppreſſed by a majority of the bad, is much to be lamented; yet chriſtianity teaches us to ſhew a greater meaſure of compaſſion to thoſe who are knowingly and voluntarily obſtinate to ruin both themſelves and others. But the regret of every wiſe and good man muſt needs be extraordinary, when he ſees the liberty and happineſs of his

country not only obſtructed, but utterly extinguiſhed by the private and tranſitory intereſt of ſelf-deſigning men, who indeed very often meet their own ruin, but moſt certainly bring deſtruction upon their poſterity by ſuch courſes. Sure, if a man who is intruſted by others, ſhould, for his own private advantage, betray that truſt, to the perpetual and irrecoverable ruin of thoſe who truſted him, the livelieſt ſenſe and deepeſt remorſe for ſo great guilt, will undoubtedly ſeize and terrify the conſcience of ſuch a man, as often as the treacherous part he has acted ſhall recur to his thoughts; which will moſt frequently happen in the times of his diſtreſs, and the nearer he approaches to a life in which thoſe remorſes are perpetual. But I hope every man in this houſe has ſo well conſidered theſe things, as to preſerve

him

him from falling into ſuch terrible circumſtances: and (as all men are ſubject to great failings) if any perſon, placed in this moſt eminent truſt, is conſcious to himſelf of having ever been wanting in duty to his country, I doubt not he will this day, in this weighty matter, atone for all, and not blindly follow the opinion of other men, becauſe he alone muſt account for his own actions to his grea Lord and Maſter.

The limitation, to which I am about to ſpeak, requires, that all places, offices, and penſions, which have been formerly given by our kings, ſhall, after her majeſty and heirs of her body, be conferred by parliament, ſo long as we are under the ſame prince with England. Without this limitation, our poverty and ſubjection to the court of England will every day in-

creaſe; and the queſtion we have now before us is, whether we will be freemen or ſlaves for ever? whether we will continue to depend, or break the yoke of our dependence? and whether we will chooſe to live poor and miſerable, or rich, free, and happy? Let no man think to object, that this limitation takes away the whole power of the prince. For the ſame condition of government is found in one of the moſt abſolute monarchies of the world. I have very good authority for what I ſay, from all the beſt authors that have treated of the government of China; but ſhall only cite the words of an able miniſter of ſtate, who had very well conſidered whatever had been written on that ſubject; I mean Sir William Temple, who ſays, 'That for 'the government, it is abſolute monarchy, 'there being no other laws in China,

'but

'but the king's orders and commands; 'and it is likewiſe hereditary, ſtill de- 'ſcending to the next of blood. But all 'orders and commands of the king pro- 'ceed through his councils; and are made 'upon the recommendation or petition of 'the council proper and appointed for that 'affair: ſo that all matters are debated, de- 'termined, and concluded by the ſeveral 'councils; and then upon their advices 'and requeſts made to the king, they are 'ratified and ſigned by him, and ſo paſs 'into laws. All great offices of ſtate are 'likewiſe conferred by the king, upon the 'ſame recommendations or petitions of 'his ſeveral councils; ſo that none are 'preferred by the humour of the prince 'himſelf, nor by favour of any miniſter, 'by flattery or corruption, but by the 'force or appearance of merit, of learn-

'ing.

'ing, and of virtue; which obſerved by 'the ſeveral councils, gain their recom-'mendations or petitions to the king.' Theſe are the expreſs words of that miniſter. And if under the greateſt abſolute monarchy of the world, in a country where the prince actually reſides; if among heathens this be accounted a neceſſary part of government for the encouragement of virtue, ſhall it be denied to Chriſtians living under a prince who reſides in another nation? Shall it be denied to a people, who have a right to liberty, and yet are not capable of any in their preſent circumſtances without this limitation? But we have formed to ourſelves ſuch extravagant notions of government, that even in a limited monarchy nothing will pleaſe, which in the leaſt deviates from the model of France, and every thing elſe muſt ſtand

branded with the name of commonwealth. Yet a great and wiſe people found this very condition of government neceſſary to ſupport even an abſolute monarchy. If any man ſay, that the empire of China contains divers kingdoms; and that the care of the emperor, and his knowledge of particular men, cannot extend to all: I anſwer, the caſe is the ſame with us; and it ſeems as if that wiſe people deſigned this conſtitution for a remedy to the like inconveniences with thoſe we labour under at this time.

This limitation will undoubtedly enrich the nation, by ſtopping that perpetual iſſue of money to England, which has reduced this country to extreme poverty. This limitation does not flatter us with the hopes of riches by an uncertain project; does not require ſo much as the condition

dition of our own induſtry; but, by ſaving great ſums to the country, will every year furniſh a ſtock ſufficient to carry on a conſiderable trade, or to eſtabliſh ſome uſeful manufacture at home, with the higheſt probability of ſucceſs: becauſe our miniſters, by this rule of government, would be freed from the influence of Engliſh councils; and our trade be entirely in our own hands, and not under the power of the court, as it was in the affair of Darien. If we do not obtain this limitation, our attendance at London will continue to drain this nation of all thoſe ſums which ſhould be a ſtock for trade. Beſides, by frequenting that court, we not only ſpend our money, but learn the expenſive modes and ways of living, of a rich and luxurious nation: we lay out yearly great ſums in furniture and equi-

page,

page, to the unſpeakable prejudice of the trade and manufactures of our own country. Not that I think it amiſs to travel into England, in order to ſee and learn their induſtry in trade and huſbandry. But at court what can we learn, except a horrid corruption of manners, and an expenſive way of living, that we may for ever after be both poor and profligate?

This limitation will ſecure to us our freedom and independence. It has been often ſaid in this houſe, that our princes are captives in England; and inded one would not wonder if, when our intereſt happens to be different from that of England, our kings, who muſt be ſupported by the riches and power of that nation in all their undertakings, ſhould prefer an Engliſh intereſt before that of this country. It is yet leſs ſtrange, that

Engliſh

Engliſh miniſters ſhould adviſe and procure the advancement of ſuch perſons to the miniſtry of Scotland, as will comply with their meaſures and the king's orders; and to ſurmount the difficulties they may meet with from a true Scots intereſt, that places and penſions ſhould be beſtowed upon parliament-men and others: I ſay, theſe things are ſo far from wonder, that they are inevitable in the preſent ſtate of our affairs. But I hope they likewiſe ſhew us, that we ought not to continue any longer in this condition. Now, this limitation is advantageous to all. The prince will no more be put upon the hardſhip of deciding between an Engliſh and a Scots intereſt; or the difficulty of reconciling what he owes to each nation, in conſequence of his coronation oath. Even Engliſh miniſters

will

will no longer lie under the temptation of meddling in Scots affairs: nor the miniſters of this kingdom, together with all thoſe who have places and penſions, be any more ſubject to the worſt of all ſlavery. But if the influences I mentioned before ſhall ſtill continue, what will any other limitation avail us? What ſhall we be the better for our act concerning the power of war and peace? ſince, by the force of an Engliſh intereſt and influence, we cannot fail of being engaged in every war, and neglected in every peace.

By this limitation, our parliament will become the moſt uncorrupted ſenate of all Europe. No man will be tempted to vote againſt the intereſt of his country, when his country ſhall have all the bribes in her own hands; offices, places, penſions. It will

will be no longer neceſſary to loſe one half of the public cuſtoms, that parliament-men may be made collectors. We will not deſire to exclude the officers of ſtate from ſitting in this houſe, when the country ſhall have the nomination of them; and our parliaments, free from corruption, cannot fail to redreſs all our grievances. We ſhall then have no cauſe to fear a refuſal of the royal aſſent to our acts; for we ſhall have no evil counſellor, nor enemy of his country, to adviſe it. When this condition of government ſhall take place, the royal aſſent will be the ornament of the prince, and never be refuſed to the deſires of the people. A general unanimity will be found in this houſe, in every part of the government, and among all ranks and conditions of men. The diſtinctions of court and country

party ſhall no more be heard in this nation; nor ſhall the prince and people any longer have a different intereſt. Rewards and puniſhments will be in the hands of thoſe who live among us, and conſequently beſt know the merit of men; by which means, virtue will be recompenſed, and vice diſcouraged, and the reign and government of the prince will flouriſh in peace and juſtice.

I ſhould never make an end, if I ſhould proſecute all the great advantages of this limitation; which, like a divine influence, turns all to good, as the want of it has hitherto poiſoned every thing, and brought all to ruin. I ſhall therefore only add one particular more, in which it will be of the higheſt advantage to this nation. We all know, that the only way of enſlaving a people is by keeping up a ſtand-

ing army; that by ſtanding forces all limited monarchies have been deſtroyed; without them none; that ſo long as any ſtanding forces are allowed in a nation, pretexts will never be wanting to increaſe them; that princes have never ſuffered militias to be put upon any good foot, leſt ſtanding forces ſhould appear unneceſſary. We alſo know that a good and well-regulated militia is of ſo great importance to a nation, as to be the principal part of the conſtitution of any free government. Now, by this limitation, the nation will have a ſufficient power to render their militia good and effectual, by the nomination of officers: and if we would ſend a certain proportion of our militia abroad yearly, and relieve them from time to time, we may make them as good as thoſe of Switzerland are; and much more

able

able to defend the country, than any unactive ſtanding forces can be. We may ſave every year great ſums of money, which are now expended to maintain a ſtanding army, and, which is yet more, run no hazard of loſing our liberty by them. We may employ a greater number of officers in thoſe detachments, than we do at preſent in all our forces both at home and abroad; and make better conditions for them in thoſe countries that need their aſſiſtance. For being freed from the influences of Engliſh councils, we ſhall certainly look better than we have hitherto done to the terms on which we may ſend them into the armies either of England or Holland; and not permit them to be abuſed ſo many different ways, as, to the great reproach of the nation, they have been, in their rank, pay, cloth-

ing, arrears, levy-money, quarters, tranſport-ſhips, and gratuities.

Having thus ſhewn ſome of the great advantages this limitation will bring to the nation (to which every one of you will be able to add many more); that it is not only conſiſtent with monarchy, but even with an abſolute monarchy: having demonſtrated the neceſſity of ſuch a condition in all empires, which contain ſeveral kingdoms; and that without it we muſt for ever continue in a dependence upon the court of England; in the name of God, what hinders us from embracing ſo great a bleſſing? Is it becauſe her majeſty will refuſe the royal aſſent to this act? If ſhe do, ſure I am, ſuch a refuſal muſt proceed from the advice of Engliſh counſellors; and will not that be a demonſtration to us, that after her majeſty,

majeſty, and heirs of her body, we muſt not, cannot any longer continue under the ſame prince with England? Shall we be wanting to ourſelves? Can her majeſty give her aſſent to this limitation upon a ſucceſſor before you offer it to her? Is ſhe at liberty to give us ſatisfaction in this point, till we have declared to England, by a vote of this houſe, that unleſs we obtain this condition, we will not name the ſucceſſor with them? And then will not her majeſty, even by Engliſh advice, be perſuaded to give her aſſent; unleſs her counſellors ſhall think fit to incur the heavy imputation, and run the dangerous riſk, of dividing theſe nations for ever? If therefore either reaſon, honour, or conſcience, have any influence upon us; if we have any regard either to ourſelves or poſterity; if there be any

ſuch thing as virtue, happineſs, or reputation in this world, or felicity in a future ſtate, let me adjure you by all theſe not to draw upon your heads everlaſting infamy, attended with the eternal reproaches and anguiſh of an evil conſcience, by making yourſelves and your poſterity miſerable.

ESSAY

ON THE

GENIUS, CHARACTER, AND WRITINGS

OF

JAMES THOMSON

THE POET.

Intended as a Baſis for writing properly the Life of that truly excellent Man.

By DAVID STUART, EARL OF BUCHAN.

To the Shade of Thomſon.

If Britain, palſied, cannot feel theſe lays
Warm in the heart, and burſting forth thy praiſe,
Me from Bœotia let the fates convey,
Or death remove me to a brighter day;
To ſcenes exalted, where the noble ſouls
Of men like thee no ſervile court controuls;
Scenes where the good no modeſt worth conceals,
And where no praiſe the worthleſs coxcomb ſteals!

ESSAY, &c.

POETRY, that divine energy (for I cannot call it art) which lifts the man of clay from the dirty world he inhabits to the regions of fancy, is a gift of Heaven, and, like all her gifts, is inimitable, and difficult to be deſcribed.

In the philoſophical, or as I would rather chooſe to call it, original language of the Greeks, it is expreſſed by a vocable deſcriptive of its power, which is creation.

In the Gothic, and all its derivatives in all languages approaching to originality, the name is ſynonymous. In old Engliſh

and

and Scottiſh it is called *making*, and poets were denominated makers.

It is my purpoſe in the following Eſſay to honour and deſcribe the chief maker of Scotland; to ſhew the ſuperiority of his genius, to do juſtice to his character as a man, and to illuſtrate his merit as an author, by exhibiting examples of them all.

I ſhall begin with a quotation from Samuel Johnſon's Preface to Thomſon's Poems, becauſe it is well expreſſed, and will furniſh a good text for illuſtrating the genius of the poet; though it is evident from Johnſon's verſes, that he himſelf was very far from being a maker.

In the counterpoint (as I may call it) of poetry he was a maſter; but of the grounds and melodies he was incapable.

What

What then is *taſte*, but the internal powers
Active, and ſtrong, and feelingly alive
To each fine impulſe? a diſcerning ſenſe
Of decent and ſublime, with quick diſguſt
From things deform'd, or diſarranged, or groſs
In ſpecies? This, nor gems, nor ſtores of gold,
Nor purple ſtate, *nor culture* can beſtow;
But God alone, when firſt his active hand
Imprints the ſecret bias of the ſoul.

Pleaſures of the Imag. b. iii. v. 515.

"Thomſon's mode of thinking and of expreſſing his thoughts (writes Johnſon) is original. His blank verſe is no more the blank verſe of Milton, or of any other poet, than the rhymes of Prior are the rhymes of Cowley. His numbers, his pauſes, his diction, are of his own growth, without tranſcription, without imitation. He thinks in a peculiar train, and he thinks always as a man of genius; he looks round on nature and on life with the eye which na-

ture beſtows only on a poet; the eye that diſtinguiſhes, in every thing preſented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained, and with a mind that at once comprehends the vaſt, and attends to the minute.

"The reader of the Seaſons wonders that he never ſaw before what Thomſon ſhews him, and that he never yet has felt what Thomſon impreſſes."

It was emphatically ſaid by the greateſt of men to his audience, when he was explaining the vital principles of holineſs, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear!" So it is needleſs to muſter up a legion of words to infuſe the knowledge of what conſtitutes a genuine poet. The genius of a poet will bear witneſs to itſelf. Poetry is the flower of ſentiment, and muſic is its odour; ſo that what is ſaid of the one is proportionably applicable to the other;

other; and Rouſſeau's deſcription of genius in muſic will be found equally juſt in the one as in the other. "Seek not to know what is genius; if thou haſt it, thy feelings will tell thee what it is; if thou haſt it not, thou never wilt know it."—&c.

Yet as the chaſte enjoyment of beauty, and the juſt perception of the ſymmetry and pictureſque perfection of nature, is in the higheſt degree conducive to the ſenſe and practice of virtue, it is of high moment to enquire what kind of culture is moſt friendly to the attainment of taſte, which is the handmaid of genius.

May it not be rationally ſuppoſed, that, without any prediſpoſing circumſtances in the bodily frame, a child will receive the impreſſions that are moſt conducive to that glorious combination of them

(which, when matured to permanent thought, we call genius) in the country, more readily than in towns or villages, where every thing is too complex for their underſtanding?

Will not an education leſs artificial, and tending more to ſpontaneous contemplation of natural objects, be more favourable to its attainment than the contrary? And would it not be proper to allow children to feed more upon their own thoughts than on the thoughts and inſtructions of others?

Would it not be better to have leſs myſtery and technical inſtitution in infancy and youth, and more natural knowledge and ſentiment than we ſee exhibited in ſchools and private tuition? And laſtly, would it not be better to beſtow more time in forming philoſophers and citizens, than

than in training up ſchoolmaſters and milliners?—But here I ſtop. Thomſon paſſed his infancy and early youth in the picturesque and paſtoral country of Tiviotdale in Scotland, which is full of the elements of natural beauty, wood, water, eminence and rock, with intermixture of rich and beautiful meadow. The horiſon was bounded by the Cheviot, a land of ſong and of heroic achievement; the venerable ruins of Jedburgh, Dryburgh, Kelſo, and Melroſe, were at hand, to add ſuitable impreſſions to the whole.

His mother had been well educated, was a woman of uncommon ſenſibility, and endowed with ſublime affections.

He was cheriſhed by Sir William Bennet, at Cheſters, near Jedburgh, the moſt accompliſhed country gentleman in that part of Scotland. Every thing undoubtedly

doubtedly conſpired to attune the genius of Thomſon to ſentiment and ſong.

"He aſk'd no more than ſimple nature gave,
"He lov'd the mountains, and enjoy'd their ſtorms;
"No falſe deſires, no pride-created wants
"Diſturb'd the peaceful current of his time,
"And through the reſtleſs, ever-tortur'd maze
"Of pleaſure or ambition, bid it rage."

It is believed that, at Dryburgh, with Mr. Haliburton, of New-mains, a friend of his father's, he firſt tuned his Doric reed, to which he alludes in his Autumn:

"Waſh'd lovely from the Tweed (pure parent ſtream),
"Whoſe paſtoral banks firſt heard my Doric reed.

Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto (too), afterwards Lord Juſtice Clerk, a man of elegant taſte, was kind to young Thomſon. Thomſon ſent him a copy of the firſt edition of his Seaſons, which Sir Gilbert

ſhewing

ſhewing to a relation of the poet's who was gardener at Minto, he took the book, which was finely bound, into his hands, and having turned it round and round, and gazed on it for ſome time, Sir Gilbert ſaid to him, "Well, David, what do you think of James Thomſon now? There's a book that will make him famous all over the world, and his name immortal!" "Indeed, Sir," ſaid David, "that is a grand book! I did not think the lad had had ingenuity enough to have done ſuch a neat piece of handicraft."

Striking example of the effects of ſituation and culture upon taſte and ſentiment!

That Thomſon's youth was reſpectable appears from the countenance he

received from Meſſrs. Riccalton and Guſthart; and the continued attentions of the latter to the children of Mrs. Thomſon reflect honour upon his memory, and excite ſentiments in the feeling heart that deſerve to be meditated and revolved: and I hope I am not writing for Chineſe pedlars, with ſteel-yards at their button-holes, but to men and women who have ſtill ſomething in them that preceded the corruption of our commonwealth!

Thomſon, having been encouraged by Lady Grizel Baillie to try his fortunes in London, embarked at Leith in the autumn of the year 1725, bedewed with the tears of his amiable and affectionate mother, the heart-felt recollection of which produced on her death, which happened not long after, the following unpremeditated but

but beautiful verſes, which, though not prepared for the preſs, I have given from a copy in the author's own hand-writing.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS MOTHER *.

From an original, in the Poet's own hand-writing, in the collection of the Earl of Buchan.

YE fabled muſes, I your aid diſclaim,
Your airy raptures, and your fancied flame:
True genuine woe my throbbing breaſt inſpires,
Love prompts my lays, and filial duty fires;
The ſoul ſprings inſtant at the warm deſign,
And the heart dictates every flowing line.
See! where the kindeſt, beſt of mothers lies,
And death has ſhut her ever-weeping eyes;
Has lodg'd at laſt peace in her weary breaſt,
And lull'd her many piercing cares to reſt.
No more the orphan train around her ſtands,
While her full heart upbraids her needy hands!

* Elizabeth Trotter, of a genteel family in the neighbourhood of Greenlaw in Berwickſhire.

No more the widow's lonely fate ſhe feels,
The ſhock ſevere that modeſt want conceals,
Th' oppreſſor's ſcourge, the ſcorn of wealthy pride,
And poverty's unnumber'd ills beſide.
For ſee! attended by th' angelic throng,
Through yonder worlds of light ſhe glides along,
And claims the well earn'd raptures of the ſky.—
Yet fond concern recalls the mother's eye;
She ſeeks the helpleſs orphans left behind;
So hardly left! ſo bitterly reſign'd!
Still, ſtill! is ſhe my ſoul's divineſt theme,
The waking viſion, and the wailing dream:
Amid the ruddy ſun's enliv'ning blaze
O'er my dark eyes her dewy image plays,
And in the dread dominion of the night
Shines out again the ſadly pleaſing ſight.
Triumphant virtue all around her darts,
And more than volumes ev'ry look imparts—
Looks, ſoft, yet awful, melting, yet ſerene,
Where both the mother and the ſaint are ſeen.
But ah! that night—that torturing night remains;
May darkneſs dye it with its deepeſt ſtains,
May joy on it forſake her roſy bow'rs,
And ſcreaming ſorrow blaſt its baleful hours,

When

When on the margin of the briny flood *
Chill'd with a ſad preſaging damp I ſtood,
Took the laſt look, ne'er to behold her more,
And mix'd our murmurs with the wavy roar,
Heard the laſt words fall from her pious tongue,
Then, wild into the bulging veſſel flung,
Which ſoon, too ſoon convey'd me from *her* ſight
Dearer than life, and liberty and light!
Why was I then, ye powers, reſerv'd for this?
Nor ſunk that moment in the vaſt abyſs?
Devour'd at once by the relentleſs wave,
And whelm'd for ever in a wat'ry grave?—
Down, ye wild wiſhes of unruly woe!—
I ſee her with immortal beauty glow,
The early wrinkle care-contracted gone,
Her tears all wiped, and all her ſorrows flown;
Th' exalting voice of Heav'n I hear her breathe,
To ſooth her ſoul in agonies of death.
I ſee her through the manſions bleſt above,
And now ſhe meets her dear expecting love.
Heart-cheering ſight! but yet, alas! o'erſpread
By the damp gloom of Grief's uncheerful ſhade,

* On the ſhore of Leith, when he embarked for London.

Come then of reaſon the reflecting hour,
And let me truſt the kind o'er-ruling Power,
Who from the right commands the ſhining day,
The poor man's portion, and the orphan's ſtay!

THOMSON'S ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF AIKMAN, THE PAINTER *.

From a MS. of the Author's own hand-writing in the collection of the Earl of Buchan.

OH could I draw, my friend, thy genuine mind,
Juſt, as the living forms by thee deſign'd,
Of Raphael's figures none ſhould fairer ſhine,
Nor Titian's colours longer laſt than mine.

A mind

---

* Mr. Aikman died at London, on the 7th of June, O. S. 1731, from whence his remains were ſent to Scotland, and interred in the Gray-Friars church-yard, cloſe by thoſe of his only ſon, who had been buried only a few months before.

Mr. Aikman was the ſon of William Aikman of Cairny, Eſq. (ſheriff depute of Forfarſhire, a lawyer of eminence,

and

A mind in wiſdom old, in lenience young,
From fervent truth where every virtue ſprung;
Where all was real, modeſt, plain, ſincere;
Worth above ſhow, and goodneſs unſevere:
View'd round and round, as lucid diamonds throw
Still as you turn them a revolving glow;
So did his mind reflect with ſecret ray,
In various virtues, heav'n's internal day,
Whether in high diſcourſe it ſoar'd ſublime,
And ſprung impatient o'er the bounds of Time,

---

and in nomination for a judge's gown at the time of his death) by Margaret, ſiſter of Sir John Clerk of Pennycuik, Baronet.

He was born on the 24th of October 1682, and was educated by his parents with great care, and deſtined for the profeſſion of the law. Nature thought fit to deſtine and fit him for another more elegant, not leſs liberal, and certainly much more delightful. He went to Italy in the year 1705, and returned to Britain in 1710, not only a good painter, but an accompliſhed and agreeable man.

In the Gothic reigns of George I. and II. he could look for nothing but money for ſtarch heads and periwigs, and ſtarch heads and periwigs was he forced to delineate and paint till his dying day. O che ſciagura!

Or wand'ring nature through with raptur'd eye,
Ador'd the hand that turn'd yon azure ſky:
Whether to ſocial life he bent his thought,
And the right poiſe of mingling paſſions ſought,
Gay converſe bleſs'd; or in the thoughtful grove
Bid the heart open every ſource of love.
New varying lights ſtill ſet before your eyes
The juſt, the good, the ſocial, or the wiſe.
For ſuch a death who can, who would, refuſe
The friend a tear, a verſe the mournful muſe?
Yet pay we juſt acknowledgment to Heaven,
Though ſnatch'd ſo ſoon, that Aikman e'er was given.

A friend, when dead, is but remov'd from ſight,
Hid in the luſtre of eternal light:
Oft with the mind he wonted converſe keeps
In the lone walk, or when the body ſleeps
Lets in a wand'ring ray, and all elate
Wings and attracts her to another ſtate *;
And when the parting ſtorms of life are o'er,
May yet rejoin him on a happier ſhore.

* This and the three preceding lines are not in the MS. of Mrs. Forbes Aikman.

As

As thoſe we love decay, we die in part,
String after ſtring is ſever'd from the heart;
Till looſen'd life at laſt—but breathing clay,
Without one pang, is glad to fall away.
Unhappy he who lateſt feels the blow,
Whoſe eyes have wept o'er ev'ry friend laid low,
Dragg'd ling'ring on from partial death to death,
And dying, all he can reſign is breath.

SONG WRITTEN IN HIS EARLY YEARS, AND AFTERWARDS SHAPED FOR HIS AMANDA.

From a MS. in the collection of the Earl of Buchan.

FOR ever, Fortune, wilt thou prove
An unrelenting foe to love;
And when we meet a mutual heart,
Come in between and bid us part;
Bid us ſigh on from day to day,
And wiſh and wiſh the ſoul away;
Till youth and genial years are flown,
And all the life of life is gone?
But buſy buſy ſtill art thou,
To bind the loveleſs joyleſs vow,

The

The heart from pleaſure to delude,
And join the gentle to the rude *;
For pomp, and noiſe, and ſenſeleſs ſhow,
To make us nature's joys forego,
Beneath a gay dominion groan,
And put the golden fetter on!

To DR. DE LA COUR, in IRELAND.

On his Proſpect of Poetry.

HAIL gently-warbling De la Cour, whoſe fame,
Spurning Hibernia's ſolitary coaſt,
Where ſmall rewards attend the tuneful throng,
Pervades Britannia's well-diſcerning iſle:
In ſpite of all the gloomy-minded tribe
That would eclipſe thy fame, ſtill ſhall the muſe,
High ſoaring o'er the tall Parnaſſian mount

---

* For once, O Fortune! hear my prayer,
And I abſolve thy future care:
All other bleſſings I reſign,
Make but the dear Amanda mine!

The original of this alſo, as prepared for his miſtreſs, is in Lord Buchan's poſſeſſion.

With

With ſpreading pinions—ſing thy wondrous praiſe,
In ſtrains attun'd to the ſeraphic lyre.
Sing unappall'd, though mighty be the theme!
O! could ſhe in thy own harmonious ſtrain,
Where ſofteſt numbers ſmoothly flowing glide
In trickling cadence; where the milky maze
Devolves in ſilence; by the harſher ſound
Of hoarſer periods ſtill unruffled, could
Her lines but like thine own Euphrates flow—
Then might ſhe ſing in numbers worthy thee.
But what can language do, when Fancy finds
Herſelf unequal to the lovely taſk?
Can feeble words thy vivid colours paint,
Or ſhew the ſweets which inexhauſtive flow?
Hearken ye woods, and long-reſounding groves;
Liſten ye ſtreams, ſoft purling thro' the meads,
And hymning horrid, all ye tempeſts roar.
Awake, ye woodlands! ſing, ye warbling larks,
In wildly luſcious notes! But moſt of all,
Attend, ye grateful fair, attend the youth
Who ſweetly ſings of nature and of you:
From you alone his conſcious breaſt expects
Its ſoft rewards, by fordid love of gain
Unbiaſs'd, undebas'd; to meaner minds

Belong

Belong ſuch narrow views; his nobler ſoul,
Tranſported with a gen'rous thirſt of fame,
Sublimely riſes with expanded wings,
And through the lucid empyrean ſoars.
So the young eagle wings its rapid way
Thro'heaven's broad azure; ſometimes ſprings aloft,
Now drops, now cleaves with even-waving wings
The yielding air, nor ſeas nor mountains ſtop
Its flight impetuous, gazing at the ſun
With irretorted eye, whilſt he pervades
A trackleſs void, and unexplor'd before.
Long had the curious traveller ſtrove to find
The ruins of aſpiring Babylon—
In vain—for nought the niceſt eye could trace
Save one wide, wat'ry, undiſtinguiſh'd waſte:
But you with more than magic art have rais'd
Semiramis's city from its grave;
You have revers'd the ſcripture curſe, which ſaid,
Dragons ſhall here inhabit; in your page
We view the riſing ſpires; the hurried eye
Diſtracted wanders through the verdant maze;
In middle air the pendent gardens hang,
Tremendous ceiling!—whilſt no ſolar beam
Falls on the lengthen'd gloom beneath; the woods

Project

Project above a ſteep-alluring ſhade;
The finiſh'd garden opens to the view
Wide-ſtretching viſtas, while the whiſp'ring wind
Dimples along the breezy-ruffled lake.
Now every tree irregular, and buſts
Are prodigal of harmony: the birds
Frequent th' aërial wood, and nature bluſhes,
Aſham'd to find herſelf outdone by art:
Theſe and a thouſand beauties could I ſing,
Collecting like the ever-toiling bee
From yonder mingled wilderneſs of flow'rs
The aromatic ſweets; while you, great youth!
O'er thy decaying country chief preſide;
Be thou her genius call'd, inſpire her youth
With noble emulation to arrive
At Helicon's fair font, which few, alas!
Save you, have taſted of Hibernian youth.
Thy country, tho' corrupted, brought thee forth,
And deem'd her greateſt ornament; and now
Regards thee as her brighteſt northern ſtar.
Long may you reign as ſuch; and ſhould grim Time,
With iron teeth, deprive us of our Pope,
Then we'll tranſplant thy blooming laurels freſh
From your bleak ſhore to Albion's happier coaſt.

Thomſon's

Thomſon's Letter to Mr. George Roſs *.

London, November 6th, 1736.

DEAR ROSS,

I OWN I have a good deal of aſſurance, after aſking one favour of you, never to anſwer your letter till I aſk another. But not to mince the matter, and all apologies apart, hearken to my requeſt—My ſiſters have been adviſed by their friends to ſet up at Edinburgh a little milliner's ſhop; and if you can conveniently advance to them twelve pounds, on my account, it will be a particular favour. That will ſet them a-going, and I deſign from time to time to ſend them goods from hence. My whole account I will pay you when you come up here, not in poetical paper

* From an original in Lord Buchan's collection.

credit,

credit, but in the ſolid money of this dirty world. I will not draw upon you, in caſe you be not prepared to defend yourſelf; but if your purſe be valiant, pleaſe to enquire for Jean or Elizabeth Thomſon, at the Reverend Mr. Guſthart's; and if this letter be not a ſufficient teſtimony of the debt, I will ſend you whatever you deſire.

It is late, and I would not loſe this poſt. Like a laconic man of buſineſs, therefore, I muſt here ſtop ſhort; though I have ſeveral things to impart to you, and, through your canal, to the deareſt, trueſt, heartieſt youth that treads on Scottiſh ground. The next letter I write you ſhall be waſhed clean from buſineſs in the Caſtalian fountain.

I am whipping and ſpurring to finiſh a tragedy for you this winter, but am

ſtill at ſome diſtance from the goal, which makes me fear being diſtanced. Remember me to all friends, and above them all to Mr. Forbes. Though my affection to him is not fanned by letters, yet is it as high as when I was his brother in the virtù, and played at cheſs with him in a poſt-chaiſe.

I am, dear Roſs,

Moſt ſincerely and affectionately yours,

JAMES THOMSON.

Thomſon to Mr. George Roſs.

London, Jan. 12, 1737.

DEAR SIR,

HAVING been entirely in the country of late, finiſhing my play, I did not receive yours till ſome days ago. It was kind in you not *to draw* raſhly upon me, which at preſent had put me into danger: but

but very ſoon (that is to ſay, about two months hence) I ſhall have a golden buckler, and you may draw boldly.—My play* is received in Drury-lane play-houſe, and will be put into my lord chamberlain's or his deputy's hands to-morrow.—May we hope to ſee you this winter, and to have the aſſiſtance of your hands, in caſe it is acted? What will become of you? I am afraid the *creepy*† and you will be acquainted.—Forbes, I hope, is cheerful, and in good health. Shall we never ſee him? or ſhall I go to him before he comes to us? I long to ſee him, in order to play out that game of cheſs which we left unfiniſhed. Remember me kindly to him, with all the

* Agamemnon.

† Stool, uſed in the Scotch churches for doing penance.

zealous truth of old friendſhip. Pettie* came here two or three days ago: I have not yet ſeen the round man of God to be. He is to be parſonified a few days hence.—How a gown and caſſock will become him! and with what a holy leer he will edify the devout females! There is no doubt of his having a call; for he is immediately to enter upon a tolerable living. God grant him more, and as fat as himſelf. It rejoices me to ſee one worthy, honeſt, excellent man raiſed, at leaſt to an independency. Pray make

* Rev. Mr. Patrick Murdoch, the oily man of God of the Caſtle of Indolence.

"A little, round, fat, oily man of God,
"Was one I chiefly mark'd among the fry;
"He had a roguiſh twinkle in his eye,
"And ſhone all glittering with unholy dew,
"If a tight damſel chaunc'd to trippen by."

my compliments to my Lord Preſident* and all friends. I ſhall be glad to hear more at large from you. Juſt now I am with the alderman, who wiſhes you all happineſs, and deſires his ſervice to Jock. Believe me to be

Ever moſt affectionately yours,

JAMES THOMSON.

Thomſon to Mr. Lyttelton, afterwards Lord Lyttelton.

London, July 14th, 1743.

DEAR SIR,

I HAD the pleaſure of yours ſome poſts ago, and have delayed anſwering it hitherto, that I might be able to determine when I could have the happineſs of waiting upon you.

Hagley is the place in England I moſt deſire to ſee; I imagine it to be greatly

* Preſident Forbes.

delightful in itſelf, and I know it to be ſo to the higheſt degree by the company it is animated with.

Some reaſons prevent my waiting upon you immediately; but if you will be ſo good as let me know how long you deſign to ſtay in the country, nothing ſhall hinder me from paſſing three weeks or a month with you before you leave it. As this will fall in autumn, I ſhall like it the better, for I think that ſeaſon of the year the moſt pleaſing, and the moſt poetical. The ſpirits are not then diſſipated with the gaiety of ſpring, and the glaring light of ſummer, but compoſed into a ſerious and tempered joy.—The year is perfect. In the mean time I will go on with correcting the Seaſons, and hope to carry down more than one of them with me. The muſes, whom you obligingly ſay I ſhall bring along with me,

me, I ſhall find with you—the muſes of the great ſimple country, not the little fine-lady muſes of Richmond-hill.

I have lived ſo long in the noiſe, or at leaſt the diſtant din of the town, that I begin to forget what retirement is; with you I ſhall enjoy it in its higheſt elegance, and pureſt ſimplicity. The mind will not only be ſoothed into peace, but enlivened into harmony. My compliments attend all at Hagley, and particularly her * who gives it charms to you it never had before.

Believe me to be ever,

With the greateſt reſpect,

Moſt affectionately yours,

JAMES THOMSON.

* Lucy Forteſcue, daughter of Hugh Forteſcue, Eſq. of Filleigh, in the county of Devon, married

Thomſon's Letter to his Siſter, Mrs. Jean Thomſon, at Lanark.

Hagley, in Worceſterſhire,
October 4th, 1747.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I THOUGHT you had known me better than to interpret my ſilence into a decay

to Mr. Lyttelton in the year 1742, whoſe amiable qualities, exemplary conduct, and uniform practice of religion and virtue, rendered her the delight and regret of all her acquaintance. She died in the beginning of the year 1746, in the 29th year of her age, leaving her huſband one ſon, Thomas, the late Lord Lyttelton, and a daughter, Lucy, married in the year 1765 to Lord Valentia. Who has not ſeen and wept over the beautiful monody conſecrated to her memory by the good Lord Lyttelton? If there is a living ſoul that has read it without emotion, I envy not their condition upon a throne.

It

decay of affection, eſpecially as your behaviour has always been ſuch as rather to increaſe than to diminiſh it. Don't imagine, becauſe I am a bad correſpondent, that I can ever prove an unkind friend and brother. I muſt do myſelf the juſtice to

It is full of every thing that gives dignity to man. Her epitaph at Hagley is leſs known.—

" Made to engage all hearts, and charm all eyes,
" Tho' meek, magnanimous; tho' witty, wiſe:
" Polite, as all her life in courts had been;
" Yet good, as ſhe the world had never ſeen:
" The noble fire of an exalted mind
" With gentleſt female tenderneſs combin'd.
" Her ſpeech was the melodious voice of love;
" Her ſong, the warbling of the vernal grove;
" Her eloquence was ſweeter than her ſong,
" Soft as her heart, and as her reaſon ſtrong.
" Her form each beauty of her mind expreſs'd;
" Her mind was virtue, by the Graces dreſs'd.

tell

tell you, that my affections are naturally very fixed and conſtant; and if I had ever reaſon of complaint againſt you (of which, by the bye, I have not the leaſt ſhadow), I am conſcious of ſo many defects in myſelf, as diſpoſe me to be not a little charitable and forgiving.

It gives me the trueſt heartfelt ſatisfaction to hear you have a good kind huſband, and are in eaſy contented circumſtances: but were they otherwiſe, that would only awaken and heighten my tenderneſs towards you. As our good and tender-hearted parents did not live to receive any material teſtimonies of that higheſt human gratitude I owed them (than which nothing could have given me more pleaſure), the only return I can make them now, is by kindneſs to thoſe they

they left behind them. Would to God poor Lizzy* had lived longer, to be a farther witneſs of the truth of what I ſay, and that I might have had the pleaſure of ſeeing

* Elizabeth, married to Mr. Bell, mother of the preſent Dr. Bell, rector of the pariſh of Coldſtream, in Berwickſhire, a gentleman who poſſeſſes much of the worth and genius of his uncle, and who is now employed in preparing a new and collated edition of Thomſon's Works, with a more correct account of his life than has hitherto appeared; in which pious work I have done myſelf the honour to afford ſome little aſſiſtance in the collection of materials. To this edition it is propoſed to prefix an engraving from the poet's buſt in Weſtminſter Abbey, and another from the ſketch of a monument drawn by Mr. Hicky, which was tranſmitted to the Earl of Buchan by Sir Joſhua Reynolds.

The text of this new edition for the Seaſons is intended to be that in 4to. of the year 1730, in which Autumn made its firſt appearance: the additions

ſeeing once more a ſiſter who ſo truly deſerved my eſteem and love. But ſhe is happy, while we muſt toil a little longer here below: let us however do it cheerfully and gratefully, ſupported by the pleaſing hope of meeting yet again on a ſafer ſhore, where to recollect the ſtorms and difficulties of life will not perhaps be inconſiſtent with that bliſsful ſtate. You did right to call your daughter by her name, for you muſt needs have had a

tions and alterations to be printed in italics. The following is a ſtatement of the additional lines made to the Seaſons after that edition:

	lines
To Spring - -	85
Summer - -	599
Autumn - -	96
Winter - -	188
	968

particular

particular tender friendſhip for one another, endeared as you were by nature, by having paſſed the affectionate years of your youth together, and by that great ſoftener and engager of hearts, mutual hardſhip. That it was in my power to eaſe it a little, I account one of the moſt exquiſite pleaſures of my life.—But enough of this melancholy, though not unpleaſing ſtrain.

I eſteem you for your ſenſible and diſintereſted advice to Mr. Bell, as you will ſee by my letter to him: as I approve entirely of his marrying again, you may readily aſk me, why I don't marry at all? My circumſtances have hitherto been ſo variable and uncertain in this fluctuating world, as induce to keep me from engaging in ſuch a ſtate; and now, though they are more ſettled, and of late (which

you

you will be glad to hear) conſiderably improved, I begin to think myſelf too far advanced in life for ſuch youthful undertakings, not to mention ſome other petty reaſons that are apt to ſtartle the delicacy of difficult old bachelors. I am, however, not a little ſuſpicious, that was I to pay a viſit to Scotland (which I have ſome thoughts of doing ſoon), I might poſſibly be tempted to think of a thing not eaſily repaired if done amiſs. *I have always been of opinion, that none make better wives than the ladies of Scotland;* and yet who more forſaken than they, while the gentlemen are continually running abroad all the world over? Some of them, it is true, are wiſe enough to return for a wife.—You ſee I am beginning to make intereſt already with the Scots ladies. But no more of this infectious ſubject.—Pray let

me hear from you now and then; and though I am not a regular correſpondent, yet perhaps I may mend in that reſpect. Remember me kindly to your huſband *, and believe me to be

Your moſt affectionate brother,

JAMES THOMSON.

(Addreſſed) To Mrs. Thomſon, in Lanark.

BUT

* Mr. Thomſon was rector of the grammar ſchool at Lanark, and from him, or Mrs. Thomſon, Mr. Boſwell obtained a copy of the original of this letter, which original is now in the poſſeſſion of Mr. James Craig, architect, Thomſon's youngeſt ſiſter's ſon, who is likewiſe poſſeſſed of copies of Thomſon's juvenile poems, of his ſnuff-box, and ſeal of arms, which hung at his watch, and of his original portrait painted by Hudſon, for Mr. Millar, the bookſeller, which was preſented to him by Lady Grant, firſt married to that worthy friend of the poet's,

BUT the higheſt encomium of Thomſon is to be given him on account of his attachment to the cauſe of political and civil liberty. A free conſtitution of government, or what I would beg leave to call the *autocracy* of the people, is the panacea of moral diſeaſes, and after having been ſought for in vain for ages, has been diſcovered in the boſom of truth, on the right hand of common ſenſe, and at the feet of philoſophy; the printing preſs has been the diſpenſary, and half the world

poet's, and was a daughter of Johnſon, the engraver to the Bank of Scotland.

Lord Buchan preſented to Mr. Craig the plaſter of Paris caſt of the buſt of Thomſon, which was intended to have been crowned on Ednam-Hill, and he gave a ſketch for a monument to the memory of his uncle for that conſpicuous ſituation.

have

have become voluntary patients of this healing remedy.

It is glorious for Thomſon's memory that he ſhould have deſcribed the platform of a perfect government, as Milton deſcribed the platform of a perfect garden—the one in the midſt of Gothic inſtitutions of feudal origin, and the other in the midſt of clipped yews and ſpouting lions.

Eighteen years after Thomſon's death the late Lord Chatham agreed with me in making this remark; and when I ſaid, "But, Sir, what will become of poor England, that doats on the imperfections of her pretended conſtitution?" he replied, "My dear Lord, the gout will diſpoſe of me ſoon enough to prevent me from feeling the conſequences of this infatuation: but before the end of this century either the parliament will reform itſelf from within,

within, or be reformed with a vengeance from without." Pythonick ſpeech, ſpeedily to be verified!

"Should then the times arrive (which Heaven avert!)
"That Britons bend unnerv'd, not by the force
"Of arms, more generous, and more manly, quell'd,
"But by *corruption's* foul-dejecting arts,
"Arts impudent, and groſs! by *their own* gold,
"*In part* beſtow'd to bribe them to give *all*:
"With party raging, or immers'd in *ſloth*,
"Should *ſhameleſs pens* for ſly corruption plead;
"The hired aſſaſſins of the commonweal!
"That nation ſhall another Carthage be."

Britons! be firm!—nor let corruption ſly
Twine round your hearts indiſſoluble chains!
The ſteel of Brutus burſt the groſſer bonds
By Cæſar caſt o'er Rome; but ſtill remain'd
The ſoft enchanting fetters of the mind,
And *other Cæſars* roſe. Determin'd hold
Your INDEPENDANCE; for, *that* once deſtroy'd,
Unfounded,

Unfounded, FREEDOM is a morning dream,
That flits aërial from the ſpreading eye.

No wonder that, when the brutal Johnſon tried to read liberty when it firſt appeared, he ſoon deſiſted, when Johnſon's countrymen try to read France's liberty, and deſiſt!

" Pudet hæc opprobria nobis, et dici potuiſſe,
" Et non potuiſſe refelli!

Though I have not the tranſcendent honour of being a member of the Britiſh parliament, let not the powerful deſpiſe my ſayings—I am the voice of one crying in the wilderneſs of politics—*Make ſtraight your ways, for the empire of deluſion is at an end.*

Thomſon to Mr. Paterſon, of the Leeward Iſlands *.

DEAR PATERSON,

IN the firſt place, and previouſly to my letter, I muſt recommend to your favour and protection, Mr. James Smith, ſearcher

* Mr. Paterſon, a companion of Thomſon, afterwards his deputy as ſurveyor general of the Leeward Iſlands, and his ſucceſſor in the office, uſed to write out fair copies of his works, ſeveral of which are in my collection. This gentleman, as Murdoch informs us, courted the Tragic Muſe, and wrote a piece in that line, with Arminius for its hero.

When he preſented it to the manager of Drury-lane play-houſe, the hand-writing of Edward and Eleonora being immediately recogniſed, it was ſcouted, and he was glad to ſell it for a trifle to a good-natured bookſeller.

Murdoch's Life of Thomſon.

in

in St. Chriſtopher's, and I beg of you, as occaſion ſhall ſerve, and as you find he merits it, to advance him in the buſineſs of the cuſtoms. He is warmly recommended to me by Sargent, who in verity turns out one of the beſt men of our youthful acquaintance, honeſt, honourable, friendly, and generous.—If we are not to oblige one another, life becomes a paltry ſelfiſh affair, a pitiful morſel in a corner! Sargent is ſo happily married, that I could almoſt ſay, the ſame caſe happen to us all.

That I have not anſwered ſeveral letters of yours, is not owing to the want of friendſhip, and the ſincereſt regard for you; but you know me well enough to account for my ſilence, without my ſaying any more upon that head; beſides, I have very little to ſay, that is worthy to

be tranſmitted over the great ocean. The world either futiliſes * ſo much, or we grow ſo dead to it, that its tranſactions make but a feeble impreſſion on us. † Retirement and nature are more and more my paſſion every day; and now, even now, the charming time comes on: heaven is juſt upon the point, or rather in the very act, of giving earth a green gown. The voice of the nightingale is heard in our lane ‡.

You

* A verb coined by Thomſon from the adjective futile.

† On this account it has been ſuggeſted, that the moſt proper monument for Thomſon would be a modeſt Doric portico, adjoining to a cottage ſtored with the beſt books on natural hiſtory, to be kept by ſome of the poet's poor relations, with a ſalary.

‡ The bird-catchers about London generally obſerve the ſong of the nightingale in the firſt or

ſecond

You muſt know that I have enlarged my rural domain much to the ſame dimenſions you have done yours—the two fields next to me; from the firſt of which I have walled—no, no,—paled in about as much as my garden conſiſted of before; ſo that the walk runs round the hedge, where you may figure me walking any time of the day, and ſometimes under night. For you, I imagine you reclining under cedars and palmettos, and there enjoying more magnificent ſlumbers than are known to the pale climates of the

ſecond week of April. This letter of Thomſon's having no date, it is impoſſible to determine exactly from circumſtances when it was written; but as the firing began at Maeſtricht in the firſt week, it may be gueſſed that the letter was written about the middle of the month, ſince he ſpeaks in the cloſe of the letter of the news of the ſiege being freſh.

north; ſlumbers rendered awful and divine, by the ſolemn ſtillneſs and deep fervors of the torrid noon. At other times I imagine you drinking punch in groves of lime or orange trees, gathering pine apples from hedges as commonly as we may blackberries, poetiſing under lofty laurels, or making love under full-ſpread myrtles.—But to lower my ſtyle a little—as I am ſuch a genuine lover of gardening, why don't you remember me in that inſtance, and ſend me ſome ſeeds of things that might ſucceed here during the ſummer, though they cannot perfect their ſeeds ſufficiently in this, to them, ungenial climate, to propagate?—in the which caſe is the callilloo; that, from the ſeed it bore here, produced plants puny, ricketty, and good for nothing. There are other things certainly with you, not

yet

yet brought over hither, that might flouriſh here in the ſummer-time, and live tolerably well, provided they were ſheltered during the winter in a green-houſe.

You will give me no ſmall pleaſure, by ſending me, from time to time, ſome of theſe ſeeds, if it were no more than to amuſe me in making the trial *.

* The amuſements of Thomſon were chiefly the contemplation of nature, the ſtudy of natural hiſtory as a ſcience, voyages and travels, and the philoſophy of civil hiſtory; of which laſt he has given an excellent ſpecimen in his Liberty, as he has of the firſt in his Seaſons and Caſtle of Indolence. Gardening, except in the ſtiff ornamental ſtyle of Holland, had made but little progreſs in England in the days of Thomſon. There were no Curtiſes, Aytouns, or Forſythes, ſtill leſs any Wheatlys or Walpoles. Philip Miller, the author of the Gardener's Dictionary, was almoſt the only man who could be of uſe to Thomſon in his reſearches.

With regard to the brother gardeners, you ought to know, that, as they are half vegetables, the animal part of them will never have ſpirit enough to conſent to the tranſplanting of the vegetable into diſtant dangerous climates: they, happily for themſelves, have no other idea but to dig on here, eat, drink, ſleep, and kiſs their wives.

As to more important buſineſs, I have nothing to write to you. You know beſt the courſe of it. Be (as you always muſt be) juſt and honeſt; but if you are unhappily romantic, you ſhall come home without money, and write a tragedy on yourſelf. Mr. Lyttelton told me that the Grenvilles and he had ſtrongly recommended the perſon the governor and you propoſed for that conſiderable office, lately fallen vacant in your department, and that

there

there were good hopes of ſucceeding. He told me alſo that Mr. P. had ſaid it was not to be expected that offices ſuch as that is, for which the greateſt intereſt is made here at home, could be accorded to your recommendation: but that, as to the middling or inferior offices, if there was not ſome particular reaſon to the contrary, regard would be had thereto. This is all that can be reaſonably deſired; and if you are not infected with a certain Creolean diſtemper (whereof I am perſuaded your ſoul will utterly reſiſt the contagion, as I hope your body will that of their natural ones), there are few men ſo capable of that unperiſhable happineſs, that peace and ſatisfaction of mind that proceed from being reaſonable and moderate in our deſires, as you are. Theſe are the treaſures, dug from an inexhauſtible mine in our own breaſts; which

which, like thoſe in the kingdom of heaven, the ruſt of time cannot corrupt, nor thieves break through and ſteal. I muſt learn to work at this mine a little more, being ſtruck off from a certain hundred pounds a year which you know I had. Weſt, Mallet, and I were all routed in one day. If you would know why—out of reſentment to our friend* in Argyll-ſtreet.

Yet

* George, afterwards Lord Lyttelton.—Whether we contemplate the character of this worthy man in public or private life, we are juſtified in affirming that he abounded in virtues not only ſufficient to create reverence and eſteem, but to excite the affectionate remembrance of all who had the honour and pleaſure of his acquaintance. "His wit was nature by "the Graces dreſt"——

"His was the large ambitious wiſh,
"To make men bleſt; the ſigh for ſuffering worth
"Loſt in obſcurity; the noble ſcorn

"Of

Yet I have hopes given me of having it reſtored with intereſt, ſome time or other. Ah! *that ſome time or other is a great deceiver.* Coriolanus has not yet appeared upon the ſtage, from the little dirty jealouſy of Tullus *—I mean of him who was deſired to act Tullus—towards him †

" Of tyrant pride; the fearleſs great reſolve,
" Th' awaken'd throb for virtue and for fame,
" The ſympathies of love and friendſhip dear;
" With all the ſocial offspring of the heart."

* Garrick.

† Quin.—Thoſe who wiſh to amuſe themſelves with the broils of the theatre may conſult Davies's Dramatic Miſcellanies, and his Life of Garrick, for the campaigns (as the theatricals are pleaſed to call them) of the winters 47 and 48.—For my own part, I admire the great Frederick of Pruſſia, who coming to his concert, and finding the muſicians quarrelling, exclaimed with a good-natured ſmile—" Arrangez vous, coquins."

who

who can alone act Coriolanus. Indeed, the firſt has entirely jockeyed the laſt off the ſtage for this ſeaſon; but I believe he will return on him next ſeaſon, like a giant in his wrath. Let us have a little more patience, Paterſon; nay, let us be cheerful. At laſt all will be well; at leaſt all will be over—*here* I mean: God forbid it ſhould be hereafter. But as ſure as there is a God, that will not be ſo *. Now that I am prating of myſelf, know that after fourteen or fifteen years, the Caſtle of Indolence comes abroad in a

* It is pleaſing to ſee the laſt expreſſions of the poet's confidence, that the form of the ſoul is eternal; that great ſpirits periſh not with the body. There may be worthleſs veſſels, and there may be veſſels fitted for deſtruction; but of all that Heaven has endowed with feelings to enjoy it, nothing ſhall be loſt, and the King of Heaven ſhall raiſe it up again at the laſt day!

fortnight *. It will certainly travel as far as Barbadoes. You have an apartment in it, as a night penſioner, which you may remember I filled up for you during our delightful party at North Ham. Will ever theſe days return again? Don't you remember your eating the raw fiſh that was never caught? All our friends are

* The Caſtle of Indolence is the fineſt poem of the kind in any language—worthy of the ripened taſte of Thomſon, and of a poliſhed age.

O thou, whoſe genius, powerful yet refin'd,
Whoſe bard-like virtues, and conſummate ſkill
To touch the finer ſprings that move the heart,
Join'd to whate'er the Graces could beſtow,
And all Apollo's animating fire,
Gave thee with pleaſing dignity to ſhine
At once the friend, the ornament, and joy
Of Phœbus' ſons—permit a rural muſe,
Thus in thy words to hail thy honour'd ſhade!
Thus to proclaim thee to a downward age
The friend of virtue, liberty, and love.

pretty

pretty much in ſtatu quo, except it be poor Mr. Lyttelton. He has had the ſevereſt trial an humane tender heart can have*: but the old phyſician Time will at laſt cloſe up his wounds, though there muſt always remain an inward ſmarting. Mitchel† is in the houſe for Aberdeenſhire, and has ſpoken modeſtly well: I hope he will be in ſomething elſe ſoon. None deſerves better: true friendſhip and humanity dwell in his heart. Gray is working hard at paſſing his accounts. I ſpoke to him about that affair. If he

* The death of his Lucy.

† Sir Andrew Mitchel of Thainſtoun. Not a word of exaggeration. He was an excellent man. It is needleſs for me to attempt ſaying any thing about a man who was eſteemed by Frederick the Great, and beloved by his acquaintance and relations.

gives

gives you any trouble about it, even that of dunning, I ſhall think of it ſtrangely; but I dare ſay he is too friendly to do it. He values himſelf juſtly upon being friendly to his old friends, and you are among the oldeſt. Symmer is at laſt tired of quality, and is going to take a ſemi-country houſe at Hammerſmith. I am ſorry that honeſt ſenſible Warrender (who is in town) ſeems to be ſtunted in church preferment. He ought to be a tall cedar in the houſe of the Lord. If he is not ſo at laſt, it will add more fuel to my indignation, that burns already too intenſely, and throbs towards an eruption. Peter Murdoch is in town, tutor to Admiral Vernon's ſon, and is in good hopes of another living in Suffolk, that country of tranquillity, where he will then burrow himſelf

himſelf in a wife and be happy. Good-natured obliging Millar is as uſual.

Though the Doctor * increaſes in his buſineſs,

* Doctor Armſtrong.—Armſtrong was a worthy man, a good phyſician, and perhaps one of the beſt ſcientific didactic poets in the world, as appears from his poem on the Art of preſerving Health. Thomſon has deſcribed his abſent moods in the Caſtle of Indolence, in the tenth ſtanza:

" With him was ſometimes join'd in ſilent walk,
" (Profoundly ſilent, for they never ſpoke)
" One ſhyer ſtill, who quite deteſted talk;
" Oft ſtung by ſpleen, at once away he broke,
" To groves of pine, and broad o'erſhadowing oak:
" There, inly thrill'd, he wander'd all alone,
" And on himſelf his penſive fury woke;
" He never utter'd word, ſave when firſt ſhone
" The glittering ſtar of eve—Thank Heaven! the day is done."

When the good Doctor was with the Britiſh army in

buſineſs, he does not decreaſe in ſpleen; but there is a certain kind of ſpleen, that is both humane and agreeable, like Jacques in the play. I ſometimes have a touch of it.—But I muſt break off this chat with you about our friends, which, were I to indulge it, would be endleſs—As for politics—we are I believe upon the brink of a peace. The French at preſent are vapouring in the ſiege of Maeſtricht, at the ſame time they are mortally ſick in their marine, and through all the vitals of France. It is a pity we cannot continue the war a little longer, and put their agoniſing trade quite to death. This ſiege,

in Flanders, as ſurgeon or phyſician, he was taken priſoner one day, taking what he called a ſtroll beyond the lines. I cannot but remember with high pleaſure that worthy character. He died September 30, 1779, much regretted by all who had the pleaſure of his acquaintance.

I take it, they mean as their laſt flouriſh in the war.—May your health, which never failed you yet, ſtill continue, till you have ſcraped together enough to return home, and live in ſome ſnug corner, as happy as the Corycius Senex, in Virgil's fourth Georgic, whom I recommend both to you and myſelf as a perfect model of the trueſt happy life. Believe me to be ever moſt ſincerely, and affectionately,

Yours, &c.

JAMES THOMSON.

ODE

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THOMSON.

BY MR. COLLINS.

The Scene on the Thames near Richmond.

I.

IN yonder grave a Druid lies,
Where ſlowly winds the ſtealing wave;
The year's beſt ſweets ſhall duteous riſe
To deck its poet's ſylvan grave.

II.

In yon deep bed of whiſp'ring reeds
His airy harp* ſhall now be laid,
That he, whoſe heart in ſorrow bleeds,
May love thro' life the ſoothing ſhade.

III.

Then maids and youths ſhall linger here,
And while its ſounds at diſtance ſwell,
Shall ſadly ſeem in pity's ear
To hear the woodland pilgrim's knell.

---

* The Æolian harp.

IV.

Remembrance oft ſhall haunt the ſhore
When Thames in ſummer wreaths is dreſt,
And oft ſuſpend the daſhing oar,
To bid his gentle ſpirit reſt!

V.

And oft, as eaſe and health retire
To breezy lawn, or foreſt deep,
The friend ſhall view yon whitening * ſpire,
And 'mid the varied landſcape weep.

VI.

But thou, who own'ſt that earthy bed,
Ah! what will every dirge avail;
Or tears, which love and pity ſhed,
That mourn beneath the gliding ſail!

VII.

Yet lives there one, whoſe heedleſs eye
Shall ſcorn thy pale ſhrine glimm'ring near?

---

* Richmond church, where Thomſon lies buried in the north-weſt corner of it, below the chriſtening pew, without a tablet or memorial to ſay—Here Thomſon lies.

With

With him, ſweet bard, may fancy die,
And joy deſert the blooming year.

VIII.

But thou, lorn ſtream, whoſe ſullen tide
No ſedge-crown'd ſiſters now attend,
Now waſt me from the green hill's ſide,
Whoſe cold turf hides the buried friend!

IX.

And ſee, the fairy valleys fade,
Dun night has veil'd the ſolemn view:
Yet once again, dear parted ſhade,
Meek nature's child, again adieu!

X.

The genial meads aſſign'd to bleſs
Thy life, ſhall mourn thy early doom;
Their hinds and ſhepherd-girls ſhall dreſs
With ſimple hands thy rural tomb.

XI.

Long, long, thy ſtone and pointed clay
Shall melt the muſing Briton's eyes:
O! vales, and wild woods, ſhall he ſay,
In yonder grave your Druid lies.

THE REVEREND MR. WILLIAM THOMSON'S

(Sometime of Queen's College, Oxford)

ADDRESS TO THE SHADE OF THOMSON*.

HAIL, nature's poet! whom ſhe taught alone
To ſing her works in numbers like her own:
Sweet as the thruſh that warbles in the dale,
And ſoft as Philomela's tender tale.
She lent her pencil too, of wondrous pow'r,
To catch the rainbow, and to paint the flow'r
Of many mingling hues; then ſmiling ſaid
(But firſt with laurel crown'd her fav'rite's head),
"Theſe beauteous children, tho' ſo fair they ſhine,
"Fade in *my* ſeaſons—let them live in *thine*:"
And live they ſhall, the charm of ev'ry eye,
Till nature ſickens, and the ſeaſons die.

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* Theſe beautiful and applicable lines were pronounced by Lord Buchan, on Ednam Hill, on the 22d of September 1791, when he crowned the firſt edition of the Seaſons with a wreath of bays.

Anniverſary of Thomſon's Birth-day, 1790.

THE Earl of Buchan, deſirous of promoting a ſubſcription for erecting a monument to the memory of Thomſon on Ednam Hill, circulated letters to a conſiderable number of gentlemen of Berwick and Roxburghſhires, in the beginning of September, inviting them to celebrate the 22d of September at a Mrs. Spinks's, in Ednam village, where Sir James Pringle, Sir Alexander Don, Dr. Bell, of Coldſtream, the poet's ſiſter's ſon, and a dozen more gentlemen accordingly met, and paſſed the evening with attick feſtivity and good humour, the Earl of Buchan ſitting as præſes in the chair whereon the poet ſat when he compoſed his Caſtle of Indolence. This chair became the property of Dr. Arm-

ſtrong, who had it from Sir Andrew Mitchel, who left it to Mr. Elliot, and by him it was obligingly ſent to accommodate the preſident member of this ſociety, upon this occaſion.

The gentlemen who aſſembled on this day reſolved to meet annually on its anniverſary*, and to open a ſubſcription for erecting

* It is remarkable that Mrs. Mary Thomſon, ſiſter of the poet, and mother of Mr. Craig, architect, was buried on this day; and that while Lord Buchan was on Ednam Hill to celebrate the anniverſary, the ſon was dropping the laſt cord into the grave of Thomſon's ſiſter.

The ſame day likewiſe, though without previous concert, the ſociety, at Ednam, called the Knights of the Cape, met in their hall at Ednam, to celebrate the birth-day of the bard. Mr. Woods, the comedian, recited a handſome occaſional poem of his own compoſition in honour of the day. On the toaſt being

erecting a monument on Ednam Hill, requeſting the Earl of Buchan to apply to the curators of Mr. Cuthbert, of Ednam, the proprietor of Ednam, a minor, for a grant of the ſpot neceſſary for the building and its appurtenances.

In returning from this meeting the Earl of Buchan's carriage, in which he was

being given to the memory of Thomſon, Mr. Woods recited, from a poem of Dr. Langhorne's, the conteſt of the Seaſons, who are repreſented as appealing to Thomſon to decide on their reſpective merits. At proper intervals he afterwards delivered paſſages from the four Seaſons of the author, each being followed by ſongs applicable to the reſpective ſubjects, by other members of the ſociety. Mr. Woods then recited a number of paſſages, ſelected by him from Thomſon's Poem of Liberty; after which Rule Britannia was ſung by the whole company on their legs, with which this attick entertainment concluded.

accom-

accompanied by Sir Alexander Don, and Mr. Thomas Potts, writer at Kelſo, was overturned by a reſtive horſe on the approach to Ednam Bridge, but without any worſe conſequences than the breaking of the machine. In the ſucceeding year, Lord Buchan obtained a conceſſion of promiſe from the curators of Mr. Cuthbert, for a grant of the ſpot neceſſary for erecting a monument on the ſummit of Ednam Hill, and he circulated letters to the gentlemen who had attended the former anniverſary, and to many other perſons of diſtinction and learning in Scotland; to Meſſrs. Hayley, Maſon, Beattie, and Burns. But very few gentlemen paid any attention to the notification; a caſt from the buſt of the poet in Weſtminſter Abbey, which had been generouſly tranſmitted by Mr. Coutts, banker at London, to be

crowned

crowned with a wreath of bays, was broken in a midnight frolick during the race week on the 16th of September; and the Earl of Buchan contented himſelf with impoſing a wreath of laurel, dreſſed by Mr. Robert Craig, architect, the poet's ſiſter's ſon, on a copy of the Seaſons, printed 1730, in 4to, being the firſt complete edition preſented by the poet to his father, addreſſing the ſhade of the poet, in the beautiful apoſtrophe compoſed for a blank leaf of the Seaſons by the Rev. Mr. William Thomſon, of Queen's College, Oxon, a copy of which is here publiſhed. I ſhall now ſubmit to the peruſal of the reader, Mr. Burns* the Airſhire bard's

* Robert Burns, of Airſhire, a farmer's ſon, remarkable for a genuine vein of Doric poetry, and for his ſuperior abilities and good ſenſe, which have enabled

bard's apology for not attending the meeting, and his addreſs to the ſhade of Thomſon.

MY LORD,

LANGUAGE ſinks under the ardour of my feelings, when I would thank your Lordſhip for the honour, the very great honour, you have done me, in inviting me to the coronation of the buſt of Thomſon.

bled him to eſcape the ſhipwreck of the ſons of Apollo, by continuing his profeſſion of a farmer.

Mr. Millar, of Dalſwinton, a gentleman well known by his great genius in mechanics, and his eminence as a banker, generouſly gave the young poet a comfortable and agreeable farm at Ellisland, near Dumfries, where he wooes his ruſtic muſe in eaſe with that native dignity which muſt ever ariſe from ſuperior taſte. "Spernit humum fugiente "penna."

—In

—In my firſt enthuſiaſm, on reading the card you did me the honour to write to me, I overlooked every obſtacle, and determined to go; but I fear it will not be in my power.—A week or two in the very middle of my harveſt, is what I much doubt I dare not venture on.—I once already made a pilgrimage *up* the whole courſe of the Tweed, and fondly would I take the ſame delightful journey *down* the windings of that charming ſtream.

Your Lordſhip hints at an ode for the occaſion: but who would write after Collins? I read over his verſes to the memory of Thomſon, and deſpaired. I attempted three or four ſtanzas in the way of addreſs to the ſhade of the bard, on crowning his buſt.—I trouble your Lordſhip with the incloſed copy of them, which

I am

I am afraid will be but too convincing a proof how unequal I am to the taſk you would obligingly aſſign me.—However, it affords me an opportunity of approaching your Lordſhip, and declaring how ſincerely I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's highly obliged,

And moſt devoted humble ſervant,

ROBERT BURNS.

Elliſland, near Dumfries,
29th Auguſt, 1791.

ADDRESS TO THE SHADE OF THOMSON,

On crowning his Buſt with a Wreath of Bays.

I.

WHILE virgin Spring, by Eden's flood,
Unfolds her tender mantle green;
Or pranks the ſod in frolic mood,
Or tunes Eolian ſtrains between;

II.

While Summer with a matron grace
Retreats to Dryburgh's cooling ſhade,
Yet oft delighted ſtops to trace
The progreſs of the ſpiky blade;

III.

While Autumn, benefactor kind,
By Tweed erects her aged head,
And ſees, with ſelf-approving mind,
Each creature on her bounty fed;

IV.

While maniac Winter rages o'er
The hills whence claſſic Yarrow flows,

Rouſing

Rouſing the turbid torrent's roar,
Or ſweeping wild a waſte of ſnows;

V.

So long, ſweet poet of the year,
Shall bloom that wreath thou well haſt won,
While Scotia with exulting tear
Proclaims that Thomſon was her ſon.

THE

THE EARL OF BUCHAN'S INVITATION TO SIR JOHN SINCLAIR, OF ULBSTER, TO BE PRESENT AT THE FESTIVAL OF THOMSON. 1791.

SINCLAIR! thou phœnix of the frozen Thule!
O ſhape thy courſe to Tweda's lovely ſtream,
Whoſe lucid, ſparkling, gently flowing courſe
Winds like Iliſſus through a land of ſong:
Not as of old, when, like the Theban twins,
Her rival children tore each other's breaſts,
And ſtained her ſilver wave with kindred blood:
But proudly glittering through a happy land,
The yellow harveſts bend along her fields;
The golden orchards glow with bluſhing fruits;
Green are her paſtoral banks, white are her flocks,
That ſafely ſtray where barb'rous Edward raged;
And where the din of claſhing arms was heard
We hear the carols of the happy ſwains,
Free as their lords, and with the purring looms,
Hark, hark, the weaver's merry roundelay!
The charming ſong of Scotland's better day:
'Tis liberty, ſweet liberty alone
Can give a luſtre to the northern ſun.
" Come when the Virgin gives the beauteous days,

" And Libra weighs in equal ſcales the year;"
Come, and to Thomſon's gentle ſhade repair,
And pour libations to his virtuous muſe,
Where firſt he drew the flame of vital air,
" Where firſt his feet did preſs the virgin ſnow,
" And where he tuned his charming Doric reed."
Perhaps where Thomſon fired the ſoul of ſong,
Some voice may whiſper in Æolian ſtrains
To him who, wand'ring near his parent ſtream,
Shall o'er the placid blue profound of air
Receive the genius of his paſſing ſhade.
Come then, my Sinclair, leave empiric Pitt,
And raging Burke, and all the hodge-podge fry
Of Tory Whigs, and whiggiſh Tory knaves,
And bathe thy genius in thy country's fame:
Let Burke write pamphlets, and let Pitt declaim;
Let us ſeek honour in our country's weal.

Eulogy

Eulogy of Thomſon, the Poet, delivered by the Earl of Buchan, on Ednam Hill, when he crowned the firſt edition of the Seaſons with a wreath of bays, on the 22d of September, 1791.

GENTLEMEN,

IT has been the cuſtom of that great and truly to be reſpected nation of the French, to pronounce, at the meetings of men of genius, learning, and taſte, the praiſes of the illuſtrious dead; and this cuſtom has been adopted by other countries, as, emerging from barbarity, they became gradually ſenſible of the infinite ſuperiority of men imbued with ſcience, learning, and taſte, over the ignorant creatures of imperial power.

They ſaw, and deplored, the rude inſtitutions of their ſavage anceſtors on the page of hiſtory, inſtitutions which covered men with honours, and beſtrung them with ribbands, according to the guſt and prejudice of illiterate princes, and left the real benefactors and ornaments of ſociety to languiſh or to paſs unnoticed in obſcurity. Fortunately born as we have been in the age of a Frederick the Great, and of a Waſhington, all men poſſeſſed of any taſte or feeling (and may I add) of common ſenſe, have rejoiced, and do now rejoice, to behold the dignity of human nature beginning to appear amidſt the ruins of Gothic ſuperſtition and tyranny, and the immortal Pruſſia, ſtanding like a herald in the proceſſion of ages, to mark the beginning of that order of men

men who are to baniſh from the earth the ſilly deluſions of worthleſs prieſt-craft, and the monſtrous prerogatives of deſpotic authority.

I think myſelf happy to have this day the taſk aſſigned to me of endeavouring to do juſtice to the memory of Thomſon, which has been prophanely touched by the rude hands of the pedantic Samuel Johnſon, whoſe fame and reputation indicates the decline of taſte in a country that, after having produced an Alfred, a Wallace, a Bacon, a Napier, a Newton, a Buchanan, a Milton, a Hampden, a Fletcher, and a Thomſon, can ſubmit to be bullied under the rod of a ſchool-maſter, or to be led by the ſtrings of the ſatchel of a petulant ſchool-boy!

Scotland, Gentlemen, though now full

of men who are above ſervile compliance with the power of the day, was, in the days of Thomſon, a nation of proud and poor nobles and diſpirited vaſſals. Except Belhaven and Fletcher, whom he hardly ſaw, and Argyll, Stair, Marchmont, and other free ſpirits, whom delicacy forbids me to mention, there were few in the kingdom who could encourage the poet to riſe above the mediocrity of a fettered ſtudent of divinity, or to imbue his mind with that noble ſentiment of independence by which his life and his writings are characteriſed and diſtinguiſhed. In the family of Jerviſwood, to which he was introduced by the kindred of his mother, he received the earlieſt attentions; and ſome verſes of his addreſſed to one of that family, for the uſe of ſome books,

are,

are, I believe, ſtill preſerved as a ſpecimen of his infantine genius.

That the lady indiſcreetly alluded to in the Life of Thomſon, ſhould have encouraged him to try his fortune in London, is highly probable; but that ſhe ſhould have deſerted him afterwards agrees not with the nature of a ſpontaneous patronage; for nothing is more natural to patrons than the deſire of ſeeing due attention paid to their recommendations, and following out the objects of their protection to the attainment of honour, that ſhall reflect upon themſelves.

The trifling ſtory about his loſing his bundle on his way from Wapping to Mallet's houſe in London, and the want of his ſhoes, is in the odour of that vulgar malevolence, which gives a *race* to the works of the *ſavage* biographer.

The only occaſion, when I had the miſchance to meet Johnſon, was at old Strahan's (the tranſlator of the ſix firſt books of the Æneid), in Suffolk Street, where I found him and Mallet cobling theſe books for publication; and there I remember to have heard them repeating this ſtory with glee, after having cut down Dryden, Gawin, Douglas, Trapp, and the other predeceſſors of poor Strahan, in the tranſlation of the Æneid.

Such are the annals of critics, and poetaſters, and with this blacking let them be handed down to poſterity, with the ſhoes of the bard of Ednam.

We are much indebted to Aaron Hill for his kindneſs to Thomſon, and his handſome lines in compliment to Scotland, now in every mouth: no more poetry and prophecy, but matter of fact!

How

How different an Aaron Hill, a Thomas Pennant, and a Thomas Newte, from a Samuel Johnſon!

Why, ſays Johnſon, are the dedications to Winter, and the other Seaſons, contrary to cuſtom, left out in Thomſon's collected works? I will tell you, ſhade of Johnſon. *Becauſe little men* diſappear when great men take their proper ſtation.

The Counteſs of Hertford, ſays Johnſon, uſed to invite every ſummer ſome poet to hear her verſes; and Thomſon, who was called for that purpoſe, took more delight in carouſing with Lord Hertford and his friends, than in aſſiſting her Ladyſhip's poetical operations, who therefore never gave the poet another ſummons.

That no earl or counteſs ever gave

Johnſon

Johnſon an invitation to the country can excite no wonder, nor that Thomſon's genius and independant ſpirit ſhould lead him to prefer wit and the ſocial board of an accompliſhed family, to the manufacture of courtly verſes, for a verſe-ſick counteſs.

Lord Chatham, Lord Temple, Lord Lyttelton, Sir Andrew Mitchel, Dr. Armſtrong, Mr. Gray, of Richmond-Hill, and the oily man of God, I have often had the pleaſure to hear on the ſubject of Thomſon. All of them agreed in the teſtimony of his being a gentleman at all points, and a gentleman by God, as well as a poet by nature, far above the degree of our modern poets, that are infuſed into the houſe of bards, in imitation of our modern ſyſtem of peerage.

Of

Of Johnſon's criticiſm on the Poem of Thomſon, entitled Liberty, I ſhall ſay nothing; but I will take the liberty to ſay that Britain knows nothing of the liberty that Thomſon celebrates!

Thomſon to the Siſter of his Amanda, at Bath.

Kew Lane, Nov. 27, 1742.

MADAM,

GIVE me leave to ſay that, among all your friends, nobody longs more ardently after the full eſtabliſhment of your health than I do: firſt, and foremoſt, upon your own perſonal account; and ſecondly, from more ſelfiſh motives, that you may ſoon return to ſupply to us the want of the ſun by your company. You may, perhaps, think this compliment a little high-ſtrained; whereas, upon the faith of a melancholy man, and as I hope to laugh again, I would, for three or four hours of your company, give three or four months of ſuch days as theſe. But at the

ſame

ſame time I muſt be ſo bold as to add, that though it be downright deep November, and you, Miſs Berry, and Miſs Young abſent, none of us will puſh the compliment ſo far as to verify the French author's obſervation, who begins his book thus—It was in the month of November, when Engliſhmen hang and drown themſelves—And yet, I am diſmal enough, ſometimes, nay—would you believe it?—as it were, vapoured. Do, dear Mrs. Robertſon, make haſte to be well.

Sorely do I grieve not to have been one of your 'ſquires that day you ſet out; for, beſides the ſerious pleaſure of attending you and your companions, I hear very diverting accounts of the journey, particularly of David's navigation on horſeback; how it blew a hard gale of riding with him, driving him now a great way

way on one ſide, then, helm-a-lee, on the other; how he had almoſt committed piracy on the highway; and how he was next morning, while aſleep, deſerted by the ſhip's crew, and left among the ſavages. I am furthermore informed that, being theveunto moved by the inſtigation of a galled backſide, and not having the fear of the ladies before his eyes, he was guilty of high treaſon againſt their ſovereign beauty, by uttering certain baſe, ſcandalous, and traiterous words, for the which he muſt in due time undergo his trial; George Scot *, judge; James Robertſon †, attorney general; and William

* George Lewis Scot, afterwards ſub-preceptor to the king, and one of the commiſſioners of exciſe.

† Mr. Robertſon, ſurgeon to the houſehold at Kew.

Paterſon

Paterſon *, foreman of the jury. But, by their mutual accuſations, I find there is a heavy charge againſt them all.

To think of leaving, nay, for ſome time actually to have left, diſtreſſed ladies under their protection, to travel in the dark through infamous places, through Maidenhead Thicket, where ſo many robberies had been committed the very day before, is ſuch a ſtain upon all chivalry, as their return cannot entirely wipe off. They were, indeed, upon the brink of perdition; for had they not returned, their ſwords muſt have been broken over their heads, their arms reverſed, and the ban of all gallantry publiſhed againſt them. Nobody would have drunk, no-

* Paterſon, formerly mentioned, who was then a clerk in a compting houſe, afterwards Thomſon's deputy as ſurveyor of the Leeward Iſlands.

body would have toaſted with them, and nothing but making two or three campaigns in the ſervice of that heroic lady, the Queen of Hungary, could have reſtored them to any degree of honour.

I hope the ladies have at laſt got their clothes. To be at Bath, yet debarred from the rooms, muſt have been a cruel ſituation to ſuch as knew leſs how to converſe with, and enjoy themſelves—the very ſituation of Tantalus! up to the lip in diverſions, without being able to catch a drop of them.—And yet, notwithſtanding all theſe diverſions, I do, from my ſoul, moſt ſincerely pity you, to be ſo long doomed to a place ſo delightfully tireſome. Delightfully, did I ſay? No; it is merely a ſcene of waking dreams, where nothing but the phantoms of pleaſure fly about, without any ſubſtance

ſtance or reality. What a round of ſilly amuſements, what a giddy circle of *nothing* do theſe children of a larger ſize run every day! Nor does it only give a gay vertigo to the head, it has equally a bad influence on the heart. When the head is full of nothing but dreſs, and ſcandal, and dice, and cards, and rowly powly, can the heart be ſenſible to thoſe fine emotions, thoſe tender, humane, generous paſſions that form the ſoul of all virtue and happineſs! Ah! then, ye lovers, never think to make any impreſſion on the hearts of the diſſipated fair. So could I proceed in my tedious homily; but I aſk pardon for railing at a place you are obliged to be at, and which I hope will reſtore you to perfect health. Yes, that reconciles me to it again; and if my letter was not already too long, I would make its panegyric.

May I flatter myſelf with the hopes of hearing from you? If you ſend me but your three names, and above them—"We are well," I ſhall be glad even of that.—Madam, I am ſorry to acquaint you, that your huſband, once famous for hoſpitality, has loſt it all ſince you left this place. Pray be ſo good as to lay your commands upon him, to treat us ſome night or other with a bowl of punch, that we may drink your healths. My beſt compliments, my moſt hearty reſpects, my—in ſhort, all the good wiſhes my heart can form, attend you all! Believe me to be,

With the utmoſt reſpect,

Madam,

Your, and Miſs Young's,

And Miſs Berry's,

Devoted humble ſervant,

JAMES THOMSON.

Humorous

Humorous Epiſtle to a Friend, on his Travels.

December 7, 1742.

TRUSTY AND WELL-BELOVED DOG,

HEARING you are gone abroad to ſee the world, as they call it, I cannot forbear, upon this occaſion, tranſmitting you a few thoughts.

It may ſeem preſumption in me to pretend to give you any inſtruction; but you muſt know, that I am a dog of conſiderable experience. Indeed I have not improved ſo much as I might have done, by my juſtly deſerved misfortunes: the caſe very often of my betters.

However, a little I have learned; and ſometimes, while I ſeemed to lie aſleep before the fire, I have overheard the converſation of your travellers.

In the firſt place, I will not ſuppoſe that you are gone abroad an illiterate cub, juſt eſcaped from the laſh of your keeper, and running wild about the world like a dog who has loſt his maſter, utterly unacquainted with the proper knowledge, manners, and converſation of dogs.

Theſe are the public jeſts of every country through which they run poſt, and frequently they are avoided as if they were mad dogs. None will converſe with them but thoſe who ſhear, ſometimes even ſkin them, and often they return home like a dog who has loſt his tail. In ſhort, theſe travelling puppies do nothing elſe but run after foreign bitches, learn to dance, cut capers, play tricks, and admire your fine outlandiſh howling: though in my opinion, our vigorous, deep-mouthed Britiſh note is better muſic.

If

If a timely ſtop is not put to this, the genuine breed of our ancient ſturdy dogs will, by degrees, dwindle and degenerate into dull Dutch maſtiffs, effeminate Italian lapdogs, or tawdry, impertinent French harlequins. All our once noble-throated guardians of the houſe and fold will be ſucceeded by a mean courtly race, that ſnarl at honeſt men, flatter rogues, proudly wear badges of ſlavery, ribbands, collars, &c. and fetch and carry ſticks at the lion's court. By the bye, my dear Marquis, this fetching and carrying of ſticks is a diverſion you are too much addicted to, and, though a diverſion, unbecoming a true independent country dog. There is another dog-vice, that greatly prevails among the hungry whelps at court; but your gut is too well ſtuffed to fall into that. What I mean is, patting, pawing, ſolicit-

ing, teaſing, ſnapping the morſel out of one another's mouths, being bitterly envious, and inſatiably ravenous, nay, ſometimes filching when they ſafely may. Of this vice I have an inſtance continually before my eyes, in that wretched animal Scrub, whoſe genius is quite miſplaced here in the country. He has, beſides, ſuch an admirable talent at ſcratching at a door, as might well recommend him to the office of a court-waiter—A word in your ear—I wiſh a certain two-legged friend of mine had a little of his aſſiduity. Theſe canine courtiers are alſo extremely given to bark at merit and virtue, if ill-clad and poor: they have likewiſe a nice diſcernment, with regard to thoſe whom their maſter diſtinguiſhes: to ſuch you ſhall ſee them go up immediately, and fawning in the moſt abject manner—

baiſer

baiſer leur cul. For me, it is always a maxim with me,

> To honour humble worth, and, ſcorning ſtate,
> Piſs on the proud inhoſpitable gate.

For which reaſon I go ſcattering my water every where about Richmond. And now that I am upon this topic, I muſt cite you two lines of a letter from Bounce (of celebrated memory), to Fop, a dog in the country to a dog at court. She is giving an account of her generous offspring, among which ſhe mentions two, far above the vice I now cenſure:

> One uſhers friends to Bathurſt's door,
> One fawns at Oxford's on the poor!

Charming dogs! I have little more to ſay; but only, conſidering the great mart of ſcandal you are at, to warn you againſt flattering thoſe you converſe with, and,

the moment they turn to go away, back-biting them—a vice with which the dogs of old ladies are much infected: and you muſt have been moſt furiouſly affected with it here at Richmond, had you not happened into a good family; therefore I might have ſpared this caution.—One thing I had almoſt forgot. You have a baſe cuſtom, when you chance upon a certain fragrant exuvium, of perfuming your carcaſe with it. Fye! fye! leave that naſty cuſtom to your little, foppiſh, crop-eared dogs, who do it to conceal their own ſtink.

My letter, I fear, grows tedious. I will detain you from your ſlumbers no longer, but conclude by wiſhing that the waters and exerciſe may bring down your fat ſides, and that you may return a genteel accompliſhed dog. Pray lick for me, you

happy

happy dog you, the hands of the fair ladies you have the honour to attend. I remember to have had that happineſs once, when one, who ſhall be nameleſs, looked with an envious eye upon me.

Farewell, my dear Marquis. Return, I beg it of you, ſoon to Richmond; when I will treat you with ſome choice fragments, a marrow-bone which I will crack for you myſelf, and a deſſert of high-toaſted cheeſe. I am, without farther ceremony, yours ſincerely,

BUFF.

Mi Dewti too Marki. X Scrub's mark.

Letter to Mrs. R. the Siſter of Amanda.

Chriſtmas Day, 1742.

MADAM,

I BELIEVE I am in love with ſome one or all of you; for though you will not

favour me with the ſcrap of a pen, yet I cannot forbear writing to you again. Is it not however barbarous, not to ſend me a few ſoft characters, one pretty name to cheer my eyes withal? How eaſily ſome people might make others happy if they would! But it is no ſmall comfort to me, ſince you will not write, that I ſhall ſoon have the pleaſure of being in your company. And then, though I were downright picqued, I ſhall forget it all in a moment.

I cannot help telling you of a very pleaſing ſcene I lately ſaw.———In the middle of a green field there ſtands a peaceful lowly habitation; into which having entered, I beheld innocence, ſweet innocence, aſleep. Your heart would have yearned, your eyes perhaps overflowed with tears of joy, to ſee how charming

he

he looked; like a young cherub dropped from Heaven, if they be ſo happy as to have young cherubs there.

When awaked, it is not to be imagined with what complacency and eaſe, what ſoft ſerenity altogether unmixed with the leaſt cloud, he opened his eyes. Dancing with joy in his nurſe's arms, his eyes not only ſmiled, but laughed—which put me in mind of a certain near relation of his, whom I need not name.

What delights thee ſo, thou lovely babe? art thou thinking of thy mother's recovery? does ſome kind power impreſs upon thee a preſage of thy future happineſs under her tender care?—I took the liberty to touch him with unhallowed lips, which reſtored me to the good opinion of the nurſe, who had neither forgot nor forgiven my having ſlighted that favour

once. While thus I gazed with ſincere and virtuous ſatisfaction, I could moſt pathetically have addreſſed the gay wretches of the age, the joyleſs inmates of Bachelor's Hall *, and was ready to repeat Milton's divine Hymn on Marriage:

Hail, wedded Love! myſterious law, true ſource
Of human offspring, ſole propriety
In Paradiſe of all things common elſe!
By thee adulterous luſt was driven from men
Among the beſtial herds to range; by thee,
Founded in reaſon, loyal, juſt and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, ſon, and brother, firſt were known.
Far be it, &c.

Now that I have been tranſcribing

* Bachelor's Hall, a houſe on Richmond Hill; ſo called, from being occupied during the ſummer ſeaſon by a ſociety of gentlemen from London.

ſome

ſome lines of poetry, I think I once engaged myſelf while walking in Kew-lane to write two or three ſongs. The following is one of them, which I have ſtolen from the Song of Solomon; from that beautiful expreſſion of Love, "Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me."

I.

O THOU, whoſe tender ſerious eyes
Expreſſive ſpeak the mind I love;
The gentle azure of the ſkies,
The penſive ſhadows of the grove:

II.

O mix their beauteous beams with mine,
And let us interchange our hearts;
Let all their ſweetneſs on me ſhine,
Pour'd thro' my ſoul be all their darts.

III.

Ah! 'tis too much! I cannot bear
At once ſo ſoft, ſo keen, a ray:

In

In pity, then, my lovely fair,
O turn theſe killing eyes away!

IV.

But what avails it to conceal
One charm, where nought but charms we ſee?
Their luſtre then again reveal,
And let me, Myra, die of thee.

My beſt reſpects attend Miſs Young and Miſs Berry, who I hope are heartily tired of Bath, and will leave it without the leaſt regret, whomſoever they leave pining behind them. I wiſh you all a much happier and merrier Chriſtmas than we can have without you. But in amends you will bring us along with you a gay and happy new year. Believe me to be, with the greateſt reſpect, and the heartieſt good wiſhes that all health and happineſs may ever attend you,

Madam,

Your moſt obedient,
Humble ſervant,
JAMES THOMSON.

VERSES ADDRESSED TO MISS YOUNG.

AH urge too late! from beauty's bondage free,
Why did I truſt my liberty with thee?
And thou, why didſt thou, with inhuman art,
If not reſolv'd to take, ſeduce my heart?
Yes, yes, you ſaid (for lovers eyes ſpeak true);
You muſt have ſeen how faſt my paſſion grew:
And when your glances chanc'd on me to ſhine,
How my fond ſoul ecſtatic ſprung to thine!

But mark me, fair-one, what I now declare
Thy deep attention claims, and ſerious care:
It is no common paſſion fires my breaſt,
I muſt be wretched, or I muſt be bleſt!
My woes all other remedy deny;
Or, pitying, give me hope, or bid me die!

To

TO MISS YOUNG*, WITH A PRESENT OF HIS SEASONS.

ACCEPT, loved nymph! this tribute due
To tender friendſhip, love, and you;
But with it take what breath'd the whole,
O! take to thine the poet's ſoul.
If fancy here her pow'r diſplays,
And if a heart exalts theſe lays—
You faireſt in that fancy ſhine,
And all that heart is fondly thine.

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* Some ſlight variations have been found in different copies which have been handed about in MS. This is from the original.

THE END.